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# ILLUSTRATIONS

OF

## Prophecy :

IN THE COURSE OF WHICH ARE ELUCIDATED MANY PREDICTIONS,  
WHICH OCCUR

IN ISAIAH, AND DANIEL,

*IN THE WRITINGS OF THE EVANGELISTS,*

AND

THE BOOKS OF REVELATION ;

AND WHICH ARE THOUGHT TO FORETELL, AMONG OTHER  
GREAT EVENTS,

*A REVOLUTION IN FRANCE,*

FAVORABLE TO THE INTERESTS OF MANKIND,

*THE OVERTHROW OF THE PAPAL POWER,*

AND OF

*ECCLESIASTICAL TYRANNY,*

THE DOWNFAL OF CIVIL DESPOTISM,

AND THE SUBSEQUENT MELIORATION OF THE STATE OF  
THE WORLD :

TOGETHER WITH A LARGE COLLECTION OF EXTRACTS, INTERSPERSED  
THROUGH THE WORK, AND TAKEN FROM NUMEROUS COMMENTA-  
TORS ; AND PARTICULARLY FROM

Joseph Mede, Vitringa, Dr. Thomas Goodwin, Dr. Henry More, Dr. John Owen, Dr. Cressener,  
Peter Jurieu, Brenius, Bishop Chandler, Sir Isaac Newton, Mr. William Lowth, Fleming,  
Bengelius, Daubuz, Whitby, Lowman, Bishop Newton, and Bishop Hurd.

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BY THE REV. JOSEPH TOWERS, L. L. D.

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1808.



## PREFACE.

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THE two great pillars, on which the belief of Christianity rests, are Miracles and Prophecy. If then the prevalence of that belief be of no small consequence with respect to the present and the future happiness of mankind, it cannot but be important, that the evidences of the latter, as well as the proofs of the existence of the former, should be placed in a variety of lights, and that different persons, with a view of contributing something to their credibility and strength, should direct their minds to this subject, and publish the result of their reflections. This, a task at all times useful, seems peculiarly called for at a period, when the disciples of infidelity are so active and so successful in the gaining of proselytes. But, although it is to considerations of this kind, that the following work, on its present extensive scale, is in a great degree to be ascribed, it did not take its rise from premeditated design, and the commencement of it was altogether owing to *accidental* circumstances.

Perhaps it may be proper to explain the particular circumstances which suggested it, and to state, at some length, the several motives which have encouraged me to prosecute and extend my plan.

A Discourse on the Apocalypse by Mr. Fleming, whose application of one of its predictions to the French monarchy has excited a considerable degree of public curiosity, *happened* to be in my possession. To reprint either a part or the whole of that Discourse was, in consequence, strongly recommended to me by an intimate friend. This, however, I without hesitation declined. But a short time after, another gentleman, who was preparing for the press an ingenious work of miscellaneous literature, having *accidentally* heard of my having this very scarce treatise in my possession, applied to me to furnish him with some extracts from it, as a curiosity worthy of being preserved, and, as I *happened* at that time to be perfectly at leisure, it was proposed, that I should communicate a statement of my ideas on the meaning of those extracts. My



thoughts were accordingly committed to paper *solely* with this view. But, previously to the completion of the task which I had imposed on myself, Mr. Fleming's Discourse was reprinted; and, independently of this, my observations and my extracts were found to be too bulky to be inserted in the work intended for their reception. In these circumstances, I entertained serious doubts, whether it would be the wiser course to commit the manuscript to the press or to the flames.

Indeed, averse as I then was to the investigation of such a subject, and accustomed to employ my mind upon studies altogether of a different nature, I should certainly not have *commenced* the elucidation of Mr. Fleming at all, had I not been forcibly influenced by the following reasons. I was led to understand, that some very scanty extracts from Mr. Fleming had been circulated with great industry<sup>1</sup>; that they had, by means of studied misrepresentation, been described as highly *unfavorable to the French nation*, and countenancing the idea of their conquest, if not of their destruction; and that, in consequence, a considerable impression, injurious to the cause of liberty, and favorable to the views of those who urged the prosecution of the present war, had been made upon the minds of many individuals. It was conceived that the Deity, by the voice of his prophet in former ages, had manifested his displeasure against the people of France, and had signified his intention of inflicting on them the most signal punishment<sup>2</sup>.

Regretting that such an opinion should be in any degree prevalent; persuaded that the words of this writer, when examined, would admit of no such interpretation; convinced that too great a diversity of methods had already been employed to inflame the passions of men against the people of France; I thought that to print the words of Mr. Fleming at some length, and to comment

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1 Among other modes of circulation, passages from Mr. Fleming's Discourse were inserted in several of the *ministerial* papers. That his meaning was originally viewed as adverse to the French, may also from this circumstance be inferred: the extracts were first brought into public notice by a member of the senate and the administration, and a zealous advocate for the present war.

2 Being myself little struck with the prophetic remarks of Mr. Fleming, I certainly should not have commented upon them at all, had they not become the objects of general curiosity. I may add, what I know to be a fact, that they excited, in personages of the most elevated rank in this country, the most marked attention.

upon their genuine import, might be attended with salutary effects. The freedom and independence of the French nation, I believed to be intimately connected with the liberty of mankind, and all their most valuable interests. Impressions, unfavorable to this cause, had been made on the minds of many. This particular impression, to the disadvantage of the French revolution, drawn from the contemplation of prophecy, I hoped to be able altogether to erase; whilst at the same time I was happy in being able to circulate ideas of an opposite tendency. These, then, were the reasons, which led me to *commence* this work; and I thought it improbable, that any other publication, similar to my own, would issue from the press.

But although the greater part of the two first chapters is occupied in considering the import of Mr. Fleming's interpretation of a single prophecy in the Apocalypse; yet, as a crowd of passages, more or less interesting, were in a short time discovered by me in the commentators, and as my own knowledge of the subject was gradually augmented by reading and reflection, I was induced, imperceptibly, to extend my plan, and at length to enter on an *extensive examination of many of the unaccomplished prophecies of scripture*<sup>3</sup>. Thus the elucidation of Mr. Fleming became an object of very inferior moment; and I long hesitated, whether all which I had written respecting him should not be omitted.

If there be unaccomplished prophecies in different parts of Holy Writ, as there certainly are; and if the general meaning of many among them be capable of being penetrated; no man, who regards himself as a member of civil society, earnestly solicitous for the moral and religious welfare of mankind, can be warranted in treating them with a careless indifference. Neither can any well-intended endeavor to illustrate them, however imperfect, be justly viewed as in any degree censurable. 'If,' says a late writer, 'the words of prophecy really have their completion near our own times, *we ought* with integrity to speak out, when we can *at all* apprehend

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3 After coming to a resolution of publishing my thoughts in a separate pamphlet, I fully purposed to comprise the whole *within a single sheet*. By gradual accessions it has, however, branched out into three distinct works, and of these one consists of two octavo volumes. Of the two unpublished works the one is mentioned in the advertisement: the other, which would form a bulky pamphlet, relates to the causes of infidelity, and to the effects which the French revolution is likely ultimately to produce with respect to Christianity.

their interpretation; and that, without fear and reserve<sup>4</sup>. Certain, indeed, it is, that he, who is animated with an inflexible zeal for the interests of mankind, will not be intimidated from uttering what he believes to be important truths, from his knowledge of their being distasteful to the rulers of nations. In such a situation, he is not without authoritative examples to direct his conduct. The prophet Jeremiah, the apostle Paul, and the great founder of Christianity, were not deterred from the publication of bold and salutary truths, though they plainly foresaw, that they should, in consequence, encounter the charge of sedition, and excite the determined hostility and cruel persecution of their infatuated countrymen, and of the unprincipled governors under whose jurisdiction they lived.

Amid those scenes of desolation and carnage, which have recently occurred in so many different parts of the European world; in the midst of a war, during the prosecution of which the multiplied outrages of the continental despots, and the circumstances of danger in which France has been placed, have provoked many individuals in that country to a long series of the most criminal excesses, and have furnished others among them with pretexts for usurping a degree of authority, decidedly detrimental to the interests of freedom, and calculated to generate a desire of change<sup>5</sup>; the

4 Morsels of Criticism, by Edward King, Esq. p. 442.

5 'It was,' said Mr. Sheridan, 'the infamous club of Pillnitz, the associated society of despots, that, in the unprovoked attack on the infant liberty of a people, awakened terror, distrust, and cruelty. They trembled for their freedom, and they thought every moment that treachery was about to rob them of it. Nothing is so cowardly as fear and panic; nothing so humane as courage. When the French were under the influence of this, terror, cruelty and oppression rose. To what other cause than this can the change be attributed? In the beginning of the revolution, a system mild and lenient to a degree perhaps of extravagant refinement, was embraced, but was quickly superceded by the fears which external danger and domestic distrust inspired. Terror was only to be allayed by spreading terror, and suspicions by suspicion.' To the preceding passage, which is from a speech of Mr. Sheridan (Woodfall's Parliam. Reports, vol. II. p. 183,) I add the following extract. 'The numerous executions and repeated massacres in Paris and the departments have excited universal indignation, and thrown an odium on the whole French nation. It is necessary, however, to make some allowance for situation and circumstances; to calculate the degree of degeneracy and even cruelty, superinduced by ages of slavery and oppression; to recollect the horrors of a foreign war, new in its kind, and unheard of before in point of extent; to

friend of peace and liberty cannot but lament much that is passing in the world, and may perhaps, occasionally, feel unwelcome apprehensions respecting the final issue of events. The following volumes, it is presumed, are not altogether unadapted, to mollify such uneasiness, and to quiet such fears.

Of many persons it is undoubtedly the belief, that the same Great Ruler of the universe, who has conducted events so as to terminate in the French revolution, has also, in the prophetic visions of St. John, in some degree given previous notice of the accomplishment of this revolution. But should it be thought, that the book of Revelation affords not the slenderest clue for tracing out those events, which were formerly pointed out by the commentators, and which are now become historically true; still will *some* of the passages, which were published by them a number of years ago, and which remarkably coincide with the important changes that have recently taken place, be probably conceived not undeserving of preservation, as *literary curiosities*<sup>6</sup>. It may be added, that many of the volumes, to which I have had recourse, are scarce; and that the present work would never have appeared at all, had not the writer of it happened to possess uncommon opportunities of access to treatises and to commentaries, illustrative of the prophetic parts of the sacred volume. But, when in possession of these opportunities, to have made no attempt for serving the cause of truth and freedom, would perhaps have been a culpable omission.

It is remarked by bishop Newton, that ‘the prophecies, though written by different men in different ages, have yet a visible connection and dependency, an entire harmony and agreement one with another. At the same time that there is such perfect harmony, there is also great variety; and the same things are foretold by different prophets in a different manner, and with different cir-

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keep in mind the enormities always engendered by civil commotions, and the madness necessarily excited by the temporary deprivation and the dread of approaching famine. After all, these must only be considered as tending to alleviate, rather than to justify, the excesses that have been committed; but, upon due investigation, it will perhaps be discovered, that the guilt and disgrace attach solely to a bloody and triumphant faction, now laid in the dust, and that the crimes, which have stained the annals of France, have been perpetrated by a few individuals, rather than the whole nation.’

<sup>6</sup> I particularly refer to the passages contained in ch. VIII.



cumstances<sup>7</sup>. Upon these observations, it is hoped, the following sheets may serve to throw some additional rays of light and evidence.

Nor am I altogether without the hope, that they may lead some individuals to bend a share of their attention to the prophetic writings, who have hitherto treated them with levity and with neglect; and that it may thus, perhaps, be the occasion of their seeing the evidences of Christianity placed in so strong a light, as to corroborate their belief, or to dissipate their scruples<sup>8</sup>. To those who are examining these evidences, bishop Butler recommends, that they should ‘set down every thing, which they think may be of any real weight at all in proof of it, and particularly the many seeming completions of prophecy: and they will find,’ adds the prelate, ‘that, judging by the natural rules, by which we judge of probable evidence in common matters, they amount to a much higher degree of proof, upon such a joint review, than could be supposed upon considering them separately, at different times; how strong soever the proof might before appear to them, upon such separate views of it. For probable proofs, by being added, not only encrease the evidence, but multiply it<sup>9</sup>. If this reasoning be solid, any work, by which persons may be incited to inspect with care a number of the principal scriptural predictions, cannot but be of service.

Another passage from the same sagacious prelate may also deserve to be cited, as it serves to display the great importance of the subject, which is treated of throughout a large part of the present work. After observing, that ‘it requires a good degree of knowledge, and a great calmness and consideration, to be able to judge, thoroughly, of *the evidence for the truth of Christianity*, from that part of the prophetic history, which relates to the situation of the kingdoms of the world, and to the state of the church, from the establishment of Christianity to the present time;’ he says, ‘but it appears, from a general view of it, to be very material. And those persons, who have thoroughly examined it, and some of

7 Diss. on the Proph. vol. III. p. 421.

8 ‘I have ever thought,’ says bishop Warburton, ‘the prophecies relating to Antichrist, interspersed up and down the New and Old Testament, the most convincing proof of the truth of the Christian religion, that any moral matter is capable of receiving.’ Warburton’s Works, 4to. vol. VI. p. 383.

9 Analogy of Rel. Nat. and Rev. 1750, p. 399.

them were men of the coolest tempers, greatest capacities, and least liable to imputations of prejudice, insist upon it as determinately conclusive<sup>10.</sup>

By interspersing among the interpretations of prophecy some political truths, I likewise indulged the expectation, that there might be a probable chance of their falling into the hands of a class of persons, who are indeed to the sacred oracles sedulously attentive, but are altogether negligent of political inquiries. Strongly impressed as I am with the importance of discussions on the subject of government, unalterably convinced as I am of the mighty influence of freedom on the virtue and the felicity of mankind, I could not but think myself usefully employed, in case I were able, by any incidental observations, in any degree to augment the thirst for political knowledge, or to heighten the love of liberty.

I had also a farther end in view. Such a statement of the probable course of future events I designed to exhibit, as would furnish a new motive for obedience to the precepts of Christianity, and powerfully dispose the mind to seriousness and self-examination. If we discover, by an attention to prophecy, and an inspection of the actual state of affairs among the nations of Europe, that the period is arrived, or is probably about to arrive, when many of them are to undergo mighty changes, or are to be visited with signal calamities; what is the conclusion which this prospect into futurity should lead every man to form, and what is the conduct which it ought to produce? Surely it ought to operate as a new and pressing stimulus to the practice of virtue. The mind of the Englishman in particular it should influence. Whilst Great Britain has seen the flames of war blazing in the towns and provinces of the nations that surround her, and, after short intervals, repeatedly lighted up afresh; she herself, during a period of an hundred and forty years, has experienced a singular prolongation of good fortune, and has almost entirely escaped from those cruel ravages, which hostile armies would have committed upon her territories. Now if this be an accurate statement, and what has been asserted be moreover true, that, during a large portion of this time, she has taken a very active and criminal part in kindling the torch of discord, and in extending the devastations of war, either in the provinces of North America, or the islands of the West Indies, in the peninsula of Hindostan, on the continent of Europe, or in the wide

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spreading regions of Africa; is there not reason to fear, that the time may not be far distant, when she will in her turn suffer those calamities, which her government has been so industrious to inflict upon other nations; and which, when inflicted, so many of her people have viewed with acquiescence, if not with approbation and triumph? Does not sacred, and does not profane history, inform us, that it has ever been the plan of Divine Providence at length to chastise and humble those nations, which are swelled with pride, corrupted by luxury, and disgraced by any signal and multiplied acts of oppression or rapine? Are we not apprized, that the guilt of nations, as well as of individuals, is enhanced in proportion to the degree of light and knowledge, which Heaven has vouchsafed to them? To the inhabitant of Great Britain reflections of this description may be unacceptable. But they are not unseasonable. They ought to stimulate every man strenuously to endeavor, as far the influence of his individual efforts will extend, to lead such a moral and religious life, as will be calculated to avert from his country the impending punishment of an offended Deity. Then, whatever may be the characters of other men, and however dark the complexion of external events, he will feel the consciousness of having acted well, and the approbation of Almighty God he will assuredly obtain. The more there are, says a celebrated writer, 'who cultivate a sense of piety to God, (which will always lead to suppress resentment, and to promote good will towards men,) the more favor, in the righteous administration of Providence, will be shewn to the country in which they shall be found.'"

Of the inhabitants of Europe so large a proportion are corrupt, in consequence of the very defective state of education, and the existing systems of religion and government, that, I fear, it is to be apprehended, many of them must, in order to be purified, pass through very considerable distresses. The observations, that follow, the mind contemplates with a degree of timorous solicitude, and yields to them a tardy and reluctant acquiescence. 'For the reformation of a whole people, and especially of the higher classes, nothing,' says Dr. Aikin, '*can be relied upon* but one of those grand remedial processes, which are probably within the moral plan of Providence. Nations, whom a long course of prosperity has rendered vain, arrogant, and luxurious, in whom increasing opulence has generated increased wants and desires, for the gratification of



which all barriers of honor and justice are broken down, who are arrived at that state in which, according to the energetic expression of the Roman historian, they can neither bear their vices nor the remedies of them; are only to be brought back to a right sense of things by some signal catastrophe, which shall change the whole form of their affairs, and oblige them to set out afresh, as it were in the world.' This ingenious author then adds, 'A conviction that such events are necessary, and that they are kindly intended as remedies of greater evils than they immediately occasion, is the only consideration that can tranquilise the heart of a benevolent man, who lives in a period when these awful operations are in a peculiar manner carrying on. It may reconcile him to the various delays and fluctuations in the progress towards a final event, which he cannot but ardently desire. When he wishes for a speedy settlement of things by the quiet operation of reason, without any of the harsh methods by which stubborn vices are to be forcibly eradicated, he wishes for an impracticability as great, as the surgeon, who would hope to cure an inveterate cancer without the knife or the caustic <sup>12</sup>.'

It is, says Dr. Priestley, a 'consolation, that seasons of war, and great calamities of any kind, cannot, in their own nature, be of long continuance. In proportion to their violence, they must be of short duration; and, as in the natural world storms and hurricanes are of use, in clearing the atmosphere, producing a better temperature of air, and a more serene and cloudless sky, than could have been had without them, let us not doubt, but that the same will be the issue of storms and hurricanes in the civil world, be their violence ever so great, and the devastation they make ever so extensive <sup>13</sup>.'

Perhaps also, at such a period as the present, there is another point of view, in which any attempt at a sober interpretation of some of the most important unaccomplished predictions of scripture may be regarded as seasonable and useful. As far as its influence extends, may it not tend to prevent the unsuspecting from misplacing their confidence, and having recourse to publications altogether wild and fanciful; and may not such a work fall perhaps into the hands of some individuals, whom it may preserve from the contagion of credulity, a disease and debility of the mind, which, like the

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12 *Letters from a Father to his Son*, 1793, p. 182.

13. Fast Sermon for Apr. 19, 1793, p. 34.

poison of infidelity, is principally propagated by an intercourse with those, to whom the infection is already communicated<sup>14</sup>? At a time, when the human understanding contemplates with wonder occurrences, the most momentous and unexampled, following each other with rapid movement; at an æra, when the hopes and fears of men are fixed on the convulsions, which agitate nations, and alter the established arrangements of society; persons of a warm imagination, by accustoming themselves to indulge and prolong its excursions, and by endeavoring to pierce the cloud that is spread over futurity, will sometimes suffer their ideas to be worked up to such a pitch of extravagance, till at length it terminates in a partial insanity; and a number of crafty impostors, or of wild enthusiasts, may be expected to start up in different places, who will boldly allege their intercourse with the Deity, and claim to inspiration, and persist to maintain, that they are commissioned to reveal to mankind some of those interesting events, which are destined hereafter to happen. The mind that is active and ardent cannot, indeed, in such a state of things, extinguish its solicitude to learn

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14 That arrogant pretensions, and wild absurdity, are still secure of being listened to by numbers with eager curiosity or blind acquiescence, the many proselytes, gained by Richard Brothers, have afforded a recent and decisive proof. But the year 1750 afforded a yet more memorable instance of the infectious nature of credulity. On the 8th of February, and again on the 8th of March in that year, a considerable shock of an earthquake was felt in London. In consequence, says Smollett, ‘a fanatic soldier—boldly prophesied, that the next shock would happen on the same day of April, and totally destroy the cities of London and Westminster,’ and his prediction was listened to with terror. Those, says the historian (*Hist. of Engl. from the Revolution*, vol. III. p. 271,) ‘whom fortune had enabled to retire from the devoted city, fled to the country with hurry and precipitation, insomuch that the highways were encumbered with horses and carriages. Many, who had, in the beginning, combated these groundless fears with the weapons of reason and ridicule, began insensibly to imbibe the contagion, and felt their hearts fail, in proportion as the hour of probation approached: even science and philosophy were not proof against the unaccountable effects of this communication. In after-ages it will hardly be believed, that, on the evening of the 8th day of April, the open fields that skirt the metropolis were filled with an incredible number of people, assembled in chairs, in chaises, and coaches, as well as on foot, who waited in the most fearful suspense, until morning and the return of day disproved the truth of the dreadful prophecy.’ See a similar statement of facts in the *Historical Chronicle of the Gentleman’s Magazine*, vol. XX. p. 184.

somewhat of futurity ; and, like our other passions, it is sufficient to regulate, without suppressing, it. What, then, is the course, which reason points out to us as proper to be pursued ? Our anxiety to acquire some information of events, antecedently to their occurrence, she teaches us to moderate ; and instructs us, that there are two methods, by recurring to which we may hope in some degree to gratify our desires. Attentively surveying the face of affairs and the existing state of the world, we must apply to the changes, which are hereafter to take place in them, those maxims of wisdom and principles of decision, which an inspection of the transactions of history, and the works of the most enlightened politicians, unite to suggest : consulting the authentic pages of scriptural prophecy, we must examine which of their predictions remain unfulfilled, and cautiously apply to their explanation those rules of interpretation and criticism, which an observation of the prophecies already accomplished, and the writings of the most approved commentators, combine to afford.

Having explained, through such a number of pages, *the motives* which excited me to commence, and those which have animated me to complete, my work ; I shall now say somewhat on *the manner in which it is executed*, and on *the nature of its contents*.

If any events, from their magnitude and importance, deserve to be foretold in the prophetic scriptures, the French revolution appears to be an event of that kind. The *certainty* of its being predicted in the Apocalypse I do not, however, undertake to prove. But this I may engage to shew, without the least hazard of failure, that the interpretations of the commentators, relative to a revolution in France, are decidedly favorable to the French nation. Having transcribed from so great a number of them, it cannot be expected, that I should be responsible for the conclusiveness of all their reasonings ; or that, amid so great a variety of extracts, some assertions should not be found, built upon doubtful grounds. Neither can it reasonably be expected, that the conclusions, which I myself have drawn from an inspection of the prophets and the commentators, respecting futurity, should all have an equal degree of evidence, or be exempt from difficulty. With regard to many prophecies, it were vain to look for their *Certain* Interpretation, prior to their *Actual* Accomplishment.

Whatever may be the defects of the present work, this, however, may be stated, that the author of it has taken more pains, than most preceding writers have done, *to ascertain the settled and fire-*



*cise import of the symbols of the prophets.* But, although I have in this manner attempted to guard against mistake, I am far from flattering myself with the hope, that I have always succeeded in the attempt. On the contrary, as the predictions, which are treated on, are *so many in number, and so difficult of explication, I conclude, that I must* sometimes have fallen into error. A positive tone I have, therefore, endeavored to avoid.

If, indeed, prophecy be regarded as a growing evidence ; if it be admitted to be a species of proof attendant on revelation, which is perpetually receiving accessions of strength and clearness (and this is the light in which it must necessarily be viewed) ; the reflecting mind, antecedently to its examination of any particular passages of the prophets, will be led to expect, that their predictions, especially if unfulfilled, will, during a long period, have a mixture of light and shade, and that they will sometimes be darkened by obscurities<sup>15</sup>, the removal of which will baffle the skill of criticism and the vigilance of inquiry. Were it otherwise, the period must at length arrive, when the voice of prophecy, like the evidence of the senses, would be irresistibly convincing, and would *force* the most careless and the most sceptical observer to an acknowledgment of the truth of revelation. But it might be shewn, that, if prophecy were thus constituted, it would be incompatible with that state of preparation and discipline<sup>16</sup>, which is essential to the growth and the stability of virtue, and which infinite wisdom discerns to be best adapted to the nature of man, and the infancy of our species.

With respect, however, to *the most Important of the Conclusions*, contained in the following work, it will, I hope, be found, that *they* are deduced from the prophetic scriptures upon the surest grounds.

Almost all the chapters consist of illustrations of particular prophecies. But the third, the fourth, and the nineteenth chapters, contain general remarks ; and are designed to support the evidences, or to illustrate the nature, of prophecy. Every where, indeed, it has been my endeavor, in explaining, and in vindicating, the interpretations that are advanced by myself on the commenta-

15 ‘Prophecies,’ says Dr. Th. Burnet, ‘rise sometimes with an even, gradual light, as the day riseth upon the horizon : and sometimes break out suddenly like a fire, and we are not aware of their approach, until we see them accomplished.’ *Sacred Theory of the Earth*, vol. II. p. 58.

16 On this subject see Chapters IV. XIX. and XXX. of the following work.

tors, to select such observations, as are calculated not merely to confirm the particular point under consideration, but such as are capable of *general application* in the study of prophecy. With a view also of facilitating the interpretation of the prophets in general, besides a general index, and one which refers to the texts which are illustrated, an alphabetic list of the prophetic symbols, explained in the body of the work, has been annexed at the end of it. In order likewise to render it more generally interesting, it has been my aim, as much as the nature of the subject would admit, to guard against a dull uniformity: and, in the illustration of prophecy, I have been encouraged to introduce a greater number of minute facts, than I otherwise should have ventured to have done, from the hope that many of them would appear curious or novel to the majority of my readers.

As the third and fourth chapters are of a general nature, containing extracts and remarks introductory to the study of the Apocalypse, the reader, should he feel himself uninterested by Mr. Fleming's interpretation of the Fourth Vial, may pass over the two first chapters, and commence the work with the perusal of the third.

Although a large portion of the materials of the present work have not been dug afresh out of the quarry of the mind, but have been applied to use ready-wrought; it may with truth be observed, that the literary structure which is erected, whatever be its faults, *as a whole*, is entirely different from any which has before been raised. Whether it be altogether temporary, and whether it have any harmony in its different parts, or solidity in its foundations, those will determine, who shall submit to the task of examining the symmetry of the former, and inspecting the strength of the latter.

On the fidelity with which the extracts have been transcribed from the commentators the reader may place the fullest confidence. Almost invariably have they been copied from the original works. I am aware, it may be said, that the meaning of the authors whom I quote would have been more full and apparent, had the passages from them always extended to a considerable length; but I am also equally aware, that, in the prosecution of this plan, besides the insupportable drudgery of transcribing, the work would have swelled into a bulky folio, abounding with passages uninteresting and unconnected; and that it would, in consequence, have deservedly remained unread and unpurchased. I, therefore, do not undertake to explain the systems of any of the writers that are quoted by me.

On the same weighty grounds, I have also found it necessary to abstain from noticing interpretations which I do not approve. But, though this is my general rule, and though each deviation from it has augmented the size of the work, I have, in some instances, thought a departure from it admissible. The writer, whose contrariety of sentiment I have most frequently mentioned, is BISHOP NEWTON; having thought it particularly proper to single him out, because his *Dissertations on the Prophecies* have passed through a number of editions, and are to be every where met with; and therefore it is in the reader's power to examine what are the arguments, which the learned prelate has advanced on the other side of the question. Had the subject, on which the bishop of Bristol has written, been of a temporary nature, or had the result of his inquiries been held in small estimation<sup>17</sup> by the public, I should not so often have noticed his opinions in order to combat them; and, to prove that I am far from intending, agreeably to a method adopted by many antagonists, to depreciate his work, and to treat it with neglect, I have introduced from his *Dissertations*, which are certainly written with ability, and discover a wide range of reading and investigation, numerous extracts, which coincide with my own views, and appear to have a fair claim on the reader's attention. But the utility of examining the solidity of the conclusions contained in any literary performance, and of detecting what is mistated and erroneous, rises in proportion to the reputation to which it has attained, and the frequency with which it has been perused.

Some persons, it has been observed, possibly may object against the *brevity* of some of the extracts. But it is apprehended, that an objection of a different kind is far more likely to be alleged. The quotations, it is feared, have been dispersed with too lavish a hand. In forming my own opinions, a considerable benefit has, however, resulted from the occasional consultation of a number of writers: by comparing their sentiments, and gathering their scattered lights, I have been enabled more nicely to weigh the evidence of their several interpretations, and to ascertain the import of particular passages with a degree of assurance, which I otherwise could not have obtained. And the numerous extracts of a similar tenor,

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17 Bishop Newton's *Dissertations* have been published in the German and Danish languages.

however chargeable with tediousness, will, it is hoped, be productive of the same benefit to the reader ; that of imparting to him a stronger assurance in the alleged interpretations.

Indeed, this was perhaps my most difficult task. I was fearful, on the one hand, of stating the interpretations of the commentators in so brief a manner, that they should not be of authority, and should be unadapted to carry conviction to the mind. On the other hand, I was equally apprehensive, lest my accumulation of quotations and of references<sup>18</sup> should be so great, as to become intolerably tedious. Whether a middle course has been pursued with any degree of success, is for the reader to determine.

Let him not, therefore, form the erroneous supposition, that authorities have been omitted to be quoted, only when no authorities<sup>19</sup> were to be obtained. And it may be observed, that to different comments, I had recourse for different purposes ; and, on no one point, have all those been examined to which I had access. The prosecution of a contrary method would, indeed, have been a task, at once toilsome, inconvenient, and superfluous.

With respect to the philological observations which it was necessary to introduce, and the remarks on Greek words, care has been taken that they should not be numerous ; and, to prevent the reader from being impeded by them in his progress, the greater part of them have been thrown into the notes.

As the *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* is an expensive work, and of great extent ; as Mr. Gibbon is a writer of the highest rank, with respect to the ability which he displays, and the information which he communicates ; as he will be exempt from all suspicion of partiality to the Christian religion, and of any design to throw a light on the subject of prophecy ; I have thought myself justified in extracting from him a considerable number of passages, in order to illustrate the effects of Christianity and the predictions of scripture. With respect to those of my readers who have previously perused them, it is sufficient to

18 It is principally on account of Daubuz's vast accumulation of references and authorities, that his commentary on the Apocalypse has rarely been perused, though perhaps more valuable than any other, and certainly enriched with more copious stores of learning.

19 The interpretations of particular passages, after being collected, have not unfrequently been thrown aside ; for sometimes one commentator is most happy in the clearness of his illustrations ; sometimes another.



remark, that, besides being quoted for a purpose to which they were never before applied, they are unquestionably deserving of a second perusal.

Concluding that those writers, who possess an acknowledged share of reputation, are the best entitled to a favorable hearing, and are most likely to obtain it, to them I have generally appealed; and from the more obscure annotators on the Apocalypse have sparingly quoted. Bishop Newton, speaking of those who have commented on it, says, ‘our obligations are owing to three particularly, MR. MEDE, VIRRINGA, and DAUBUZ<sup>20</sup>.’ To them, therefore, I have often recurred; and, as I know no commentator, who can be compared with the last of the three, and with DR. LANCASTER who has copied from him, for the accuracy, the care, and the consistency, with which they have explained the prophetic symbols, I have quoted from these two clergymen with more than ordinary frequency.

The size of the present publication would have been greatly reduced, had it not been conceived, that there was an intimate dependency of its several parts, and had they not appeared to be so adjusted, as mutually to impart light and evidence. Among the most powerful of the motives, which have prompted me to admit so many citations and authorities, is my solicitude to shew, that a great part of my ideas on prophecy have *long ago* been entertained by such as have made that subject their study; and that they must, therefore, have been suggested by an *inspection of the prophetic symbols themselves* without any retrospect to those great events, which have recently arrested the attention, and now shake the governments, of the European world. Many passages also I have been induced the more easily to insert, because they proceed from such writers, as can never be charged with entertaining sentiments hostile to the power either of kings or of priests. Of the strong declarations, which occur in the present volumes, resulting from the study of prophecy, and levelled against civil tyrants or sacerdotal usurpation, not a few, indeed, will demonstrate the mighty power of truth, and the irresistible clearness of some parts of the scriptural prophecies; for it will be seen, that such declarations have not unfrequently escaped from the pens of those, whose projects, prejudices, and situations powerfully prompted them, on such subjects as these, to caution and to silence. Often

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20 Dissert. on the Proph. vol. III. p. 8.

would the labor of *writing* have been less than that of *collecting*. But it was the aim of the author to convince ; and this aim, in many cases, appeared most likely to be attained by appealing to writers, who are distinguished by their abilities or their learning, and whose opinions carry with them a degree of weight and authority.

Should the reader be of opinion, that any of the more important conclusions, contained in the following pages, are unaccompanied by any satisfactory proofs ; let him recollect, that he will not, from that circumstance, be authorised in deciding, that they are incapable of being proved. Let him be reminded, that no error is more frequent than to attribute a deficiency in the mode of treating a subject to the subject itself. That he may not, in this instance, be deceived by this error, and that the contents of the present volumes may be the less likely to disappoint him ; I think it right to acknowledge, that, in consequence of having altogether neglected the study of Daniel and the Apocalypse, I know not that I had, till the year before last, and before a part of it had passed away, read a single page of any one of the writers on those two prophets. Let it also be remembered, that the researches of *a single individual* on a subject like this, if it be a part of his object *to collect authorities on any particular points*, even if carried on for several years, must necessarily be partial and confined.

When I look back on the comparatively small portion of time, which I have dedicated to the study of prophecy ; when I contrast the imperfection of the execution with the extent of my design and the importance of my subject ; I feel happy, that I have in some degree the power of shielding myself from the charge of presumption, as I have been able truly to assert, that the present work derived not its origin from a consciousness of my being competent to the performance, but that it has been the result of different accidental circumstances, and has been swelled, by little and little, to a size which was very far from my primary intention.

At a time when three hundred pages of it were printed, much of the remaining part was yet unwritten. Had it been otherwise, some advantageous alterations might have been made in the arrangement of the work. But I know not, that I should have been able to have introduced any very material improvement in this respect ; and, indeed, were I not apprehensive, that the preface may

be chargeable with too minute a detail of particulars, I should now perhaps, proceed to vindicate and unfold the order<sup>21</sup>, in which the several topics are arranged. But, omitting this, I conclude, with assuring the reader, that had not a very large proportion of my time, since the commencement of the work, been occupied by other pursuits and by a variety of engagements, and, had I not been convinced, that to delay<sup>22</sup> it would be in a great degree to counteract any efficacy it may be supposed to have, I should have retrenched its redundancies, and should have rendered it, in all respects, less unworthy of his perusal.

21 *The Order of Time* is in a great measure observed ; and it has been my endeavor to arrange, near to each other, those predictions, which, though they proceed from different prophets, relate to the same events.

22 No motive, indeed, but this should have prompted me to so hasty a publication of the present work ; impressed as I am with the assertion of Vitringa, when speaking of the Apocalypse, *absque intensissima mentis excitatione neminem ad arcanos ejus sensus pervenire posse* ; and with the caution which he gives, *ut ad interpretationem ejus nemo nisi timide et lente absque nimia festinatione accedat, post cogitationes omnes diligenter subactas digestasque. Prefat.* That a great part of the present work, with respect to style, is written hastily and with too little care, is also admitted. Yet, it is hoped, that it may almost every where lay claim to the praise of perspicuity. Instances of inelegance and incorrectness are also to be found, in consequence of the work having been printed more than a hundred miles from the place where I reside, and of my not having received the revise of a single sheet.

LONDON, 19th Dec. 1795.

## ADVERTISEMENT

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THE author of the present work, some time since, intended to have subjoined at the end of it a series of chapters ON THE FUTURE IMPROVED STATE OF MANKIND. Had he not been led by accident to elucidate Mr. Fleming, and in consequence to investigate the nature of the millenium, they would never have been written. But, though much of his time has been exclusively employed in the composition of them, and though these chapters are now almost in a finished state, yet he has been induced to omit them; partly because what is now printed is, of itself, of a very large size, and may not improbably exhaust the reader's patience; and partly because the subject of the two divisions of his work are materially different, although the one would, indeed, be naturally supplemental to the other. In composing the present performance, the writings of commentators and theologues have been principally consulted, and principally quoted. In that which remains unprinted, where authors are appealed to, appeal has been ordinarily made by him to those of a very different description, and particularly to naturalists, philosophers, and physicians, to politicians, historians, and the writers of travels. Whilst the first part of the work, or, as he ought rather to express himself, *the subject of it*, is best calculated to please some classes of readers; others would probably be more interested by the second and remaining portion, which is founded, not on the interpretation of scripture and prophecy, but on the deductions of reason and experience. Should a favorable sentence be pronounced with respect to the present volumes, by such as are competent judges; and should those multiplied engagements, which have long occupied the greater part of his time, permit him to prepare the subsequent work for the press; it is his intention, at some future time, to submit it to the judgment of the public.

## LIST OF AUTHORS.

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THAT the pages may not be unnecessarily crowded with the *dates* and *titles* of books, I shall here enumerate those writers on the subject of prophecy, from which citations have most frequently been made.

The following authors have written expressly on the book of Revelation, and therefore their titles may not be enumerated. They have given a regular commentary, chapter by chapter, and therefore, when I refer to their explanation of any particular chapter or verse, it will scarcely ever be necessary to cite the page, as by consulting them it will be easy to find the paragraph quoted.

Mr. Brightman,	4to.	Lond.	1644
Mr. Durham,	fol.	Amsterdam	1660
Dr. Henry More	4to.	Lond.	1680
Mr. Cradock	8vo.	Lond.	1696
Peganius	12mo.	Lond.	without date

Translated from the High Dutch, and sold by Moses Pitt, at the White Hart in Little Britain.

Mr. Waple	4to.	Lond.	1715
Mr. Daubuz	fol.	Lond.	1720
Mr. Jam. Robertson	fol.	Edinb.	1730
Vitringa	4to.	Amstelodami	1719
Mr. Tho. Pyle	8vo.	Lond.	1735
Mr. Moses Lowman	4to.	Lond.	1745

Of the Dissert. on the Proph. by

Bp. Newton	vol. III. 8vo.	Lond.	1758
is almost entirely on the Apocalypse.			
Dr. Bryce Johnson,	2 vols. 8vo.	Edinb.	1794

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In my citations from the subsequent commentators on the Apocalypse, I have quoted the page, as they do not illustrate it in the order of the chapters.

Joseph Mede, in his works, 2 vols.

Fol.	Lond.	1663
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Dr. Tho. Goodwin, in his works, vol. II.

Fol.	Lond.	1683
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M. Jurieu.

8vo.	Lond.	1687
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Mr. W. Whiston

4to.	Cambridge	1706
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For the same reason in quoting from those which follow, I have also specified the page.

A Calculation of the Name, Mark, and Number of the Name, of the Beast, by

Nath. Stephens 4to. Lond. 1656

The Mystery of Iniquity, by

Dr. Henry More fol. Lond. 1664

Apocalypitical Mysteries.

By H. K. 12mo. Lond. 1667

The Judgments of God upon the Roman Catholic Church, by

Dr. Cressener 4to. Lond. 1689

Demonstration of the First Principles of the Protestant Applications of the Apocalypse, by

Dr. Cressener 4to. Lond. 1690

Obs. upon the Prophecies of Daniel and the Apocalypse, by

Sir Isaac Newton 4to. Lond. 1733

Bengelius's Introd. to his Expos. of the Apoc. with the greatest part of the conclusion of it; translated from the High Dutch by

J. Robertson, M. D. 8vo. Lond. 1757

The Evidence of Christianity Deduced from Facts and the Testimony of Sense, in a Series of Discourses, preached at Boyle's Lecture, by

Wm. Worthington, D. D. 2 vols. 8vo. Lond. 1769

Introd. to the Study of the Prophecies concerning the Christian Church in 12 Serm. preached at bishop Warburton's Lecture, by

Rich. Hurd, D. D. 2 vols. 12mo. Lond. 1776

Twelve Sermons on the Prophecies concerning the Christian Church, preached at bishop Warburton's Lecture, by

Dr. Hallifax 8vo. Lond. 1776

Discourses on Prophecy, preached at bishop Warburton's Lecture, by

East Apthorp, 2 vols. 8vo. Lond. 1786

A Letter to bishop Hurd, wherein the Importance of the Prophecies of the New Testament, and the Nature of the Grand Apostacy predicted in them, are particularly and impartially considered by Rich. Evanson,

A. M. 2d Ed. 8vo. Lond. 1792

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*It is proper to inform the reader, that the heads prefixed to the chapters, are more brief than those contained in the preceding table of contents.*

The table of contents of the second volume, is also prefixed to that volume; but the numbering of the chapters is continued in succession from the concluding chapter of the first volume; which will also render the references to the chapters in the English edition, and this edition equally correct.

## CHAPTER I.

### ON MR. FLEMING'S INTERPRETATION OF THE FOURTH VIAL

THE desire of penetrating into futurity is a passion congenial to the human mind ; and whenever, from a careful inspection of prophecy, the attempt is attended with any share of success, our curiosity is awakened and our attention fixed. This, in the opinion of many, has happened with respect to a Discourse of Mr. Fleming ; since, writing at the commencement of the present century, he gave, in the course of his remarks on the book of Revelation, such a representation of events, as, in a considerable degree, has been accomplished near the period of its termination.

In the sublime scenery of the xvth ch. of that prophecy, *seven angels*<sup>1</sup> are represented as having seven vials, which are called *the seven last plagues* ; for, says the prophet (v. 1.) *in them is filled up the wrath of God*. These plagues, which are successively described in ch. xvi, Mr. Fleming regards as ‘ judgments’ principally, though not exclusively, ‘ upon Rome Papal’<sup>2</sup>.

The passages which follow are extracted from a Discourse, published, with three others, by Mr. Fleming, in

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1 ‘ In the style of prophecy, every thing is called an *angel*, that notifies a message from God, or executes the will of God.’ Lowman on ch. i. 1.

2 See p. 59, 77.

3 Our author’s father, who published a large work, entitled *the Fulfilling of Scripture*, was one of the 400 ministers of Scotland, who were ejected from their livings soon after the restoration of Charles II. When liberated from his confinement in the Tolbooth of Edinburgh, he fled to Holland ; and his son, Mr. Robert Fleming, in consequence, carried on his

the year 1701. After endeavoring to shew, that the three first vials pointed out events, which had undermined the power of the Roman pontiff and his adherents; he proceeds to the fourth, as foretelling other events, which would, assuredly, be in a high degree injurious to them.

St. John says, ch. xvi. v. 8. *And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire.* ‘The chief thing,’ says Mr. Fleming, ‘to be taken notice of here, is, that *the sun* and other luminaries of heaven are the emblems of princes and kingdoms, as we took notice of before. Therefore the pouring out of this vial *on the sun* must denote the humiliation of some eminent potentates of the Romish interest, whose influences and countenance cherish and support the Papal cause. And these therefore must be principally understood of the houses of Austria and Bourbon, though not exclusively of other Popish princes.—So that there is ground to hope, that, about the beginning of another such century, things may again alter for the better: for I cannot but hope that some new mortification of the chief supporters of Antichrist will then happen; and perhaps *the French Monarchy* may begin to be considerably humbled about that time: that whereas the present French king takes *the*

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studies in the universities of Leyden and Utrecht. After having prosecuted them with diligence, he became successively minister of the English church at Leyden, and the Scotch church at Rotterdam; and he afterwards removed to that of Founder’s Hall in Lothbury. The subsequent passage is from a letter of the Rev. Mr. Joshua Toulman of Taunton, communicated by him to the European Magazine, and extracted from Dr. Joshua Oldfield’s funeral sermon for Mr. Fleming. He was induced to settle with the congregation ‘in Lothbury; not only at the earnest invitation of the people, but by the desire of king William, who often advised with him on the concerns of his own country. But such were his modesty and prudence, that he requested, whenever he was called to court, it might be with the greatest privacy. He was richly furnished both with ornamental and solid learning; being conversant not only with fathers and councils, and ecclesiastical and civil historians, but with the Oriental languages, the Jewish rabbies, and the polite authors, ancient and modern.—He was highly valued by the professors of foreign universities.’ See Pref. to his *Christology*, and *Eur. Mag.* for March, 1793.

sun for his emblem, and this for his motto, *Nec pluribus impar*, he may at length, or rather his successors, and *the Monarchy Itself* (at least before the year 1794) be forced to acknowledge, that (in respect to neighboring potentates) he is even *singulis impar*. But as to the expiration of this vial, I do fear it will not be until the year 1794. The reason of which conjecture is this; that I find the pope got a new foundation of exaltation, when Justinian, upon his conquest of Italy, left it in a great measure to the pope's management, being willing to eclipse his own authority, to advance that of this haughty prelate. Now this being in the year 552; this, by the addition of the 1260 years, reaches down to the year 1811; which, according to prophetic account, is the year 1794.\*

After declaring that the sun of the papal kingdom would for a time be suffered to run his dreadful career, he adds, 'But if they enquire farther, whether *the sun* of the popish kingdom is not to be eclipsed himself at length? I must positively assert he will; else this vial were not a judgment upon him and the Romish party. But if yet again the question be, when this is to fall out and how? I must tell you, that I have nothing farther to add to what I have said, as to the time. But as to *the manner*, how this is to be done, our text does lay a foundation of some more distinct thoughts. Therefore, in the 4th and last place, we may justly suppose, that THE FRENCH MONARCHY, after it has scorched others, will ITSELF CONSUME by doing so; *its* fire, and that which is the fuel that maintains it, wasting insensibly, till it be exhausted at last towards the end of this century\*.'

That such passages as these should ever have been conceived to foretell ruin to the people of France, and success to the combination of crowned heads against them, seems not a little surprising. Every person, who has flattered himself with the idea, that our learned divine had predicted the downfall of this great *nation* before the year 1794,



has widely mistaken the hope and the expectation of an author, with whose political sentiments he discovers himself to be altogether unacquainted.

*The Character of the man, the general Design of his discourse, and the plain Import of the words themselves*, forbid alike such a supposition.

To the principles of toryism and tyranny Mr. Fleming shewed himself a strenuous opponent. Among the works<sup>5</sup>, of which he was the author, is a *Discourse on the Death of King William*, printed only the year after that which he published on the Apocalypse. Aware that he was likely to be attacked for the extent to which he had carried his love of freedom; he says, in the preface to the former of these Discourses, ‘If any shall quarrel with me for what I have cursorily suggested in behalf of the liberty of mankind; I shall not think it worth my while to take notice of them.’ A little farther he recommends, that the advocates of oppression and slavish obedience should be transported to Turkey, that they might learn their doctrine in its highest elevation from the sultan and the mufti. Or, if that journey be too long, that they may step over only to France, and behold what the state of mankind is *there*. Speaking of king William, he says, ‘Nor was he ever so mad as to dream, that *kings, popes, prelates, or lords*, were sent down, as it were from the clouds, booted and spurred to ride and tyrannize over their inferiors; as if other men were a lower sort of animals, made for them to use as they please<sup>6</sup>.’

5 Of these, his *Christology*, in 3 volumes 8vo, was the most considerable in point of size.

6 P. 129. To evince yet farther the ardor of Mr. Fleming’s zeal for the interests of civil liberty, I shall transcribe, on a subject which is in itself interesting, some passages from his work, entitled, *the Hist. of Hereditary Right; wherein its indefeasibleness, and all other such late doctrines concerning the absolute power of princes, and the unlimited obedience of subjects, are fully and finally determined*. By this zeal our orthodox divine was excited to censure the patriarch Joseph in the severest terms.

It must indeed be confessed, that the son of Jacob, amiable as was his character in the younger part of life, appears to have been afterwards corrupted by his long intercourse with a court. We learn in the xli, and

Had Mr. Fleming, instead of being an opposer, been a propagator, of the Turkish doctrine of non-resistance; had he taught that the happiness of the many ought to be sacrificed to the interest or the prejudices of the privileged ranks; there might have been some color of probability for the meaning annexed to his words; it would have been no

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xlvi chapters of Genesis, that after obtaining possession of the corn which grew upon the estates of the people of Egypt, he took advantage of a dreadful famine which ensued; and obliged them, in exchange for food, to deliver into the hands of Pharaoh the greater part of their property; their money, their horses, and their cattle. But this did not satisfy his ambition and that of the monarch. We find the famished Egyptians at length reduced to such extremities, that they exclaim unto Joseph, *Wherefore shall we die.—Buy us and our land for bread, and we and our land will be servants unto Pharaoh*, i. e. as bishop Patrick explains it, 'We, that were free, will become the king's bond-men; and our land, which was our own, we will hold of him.' *And Joseph bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh; for the Egyptians sold every man his field, because the famine prevailed over them: so the land became Pharaoh's.* And as for the people, he removed them to cities from one end of the borders of Egypt even to the other end thereof. *Only the land of the priests bought he not; for the priests had a portion assigned them of Pharaoh, and did eat their portion which Pharaoh gave them.—And Joseph made it a law over the land of Egypt unto this day, that Pharaoh should have the fifth part*, i. e. of the produce of all the estates; except the land of the priests only, which became not Pharaoh's. Joseph 'was afraid,' says Mr. Fleming, 'that the Egyptians might regain their liberty, and avenge themselves on him, or his posterity. Therefore he resolves to make sure work of it; and breaks them off from all their settlements, dwellings, relations, possessions, interests, and acquaintances. So that this was, in effect, a pattern for transportation and captivities, which tyrants copied after in following ages.—I am bold to say, that Joseph acted a barbarous and inhuman part, in enslaving a free people.' The people of Egypt, 'he made all equally slaves, excepting the priests only, whom he cunningly made an exception, that he might by them strengthen himself, against the rest of the people, well knowing their influence both on the prince and commonalty, and that they were the proper tools of arbitrary power and passive obedience.—I cannot but look on Joseph to have acted a very wicked part in this procedure.' P. 64, &c. When the Israelites afterwards desired a king, 'God,' says Mr. Fleming, 'from a tender regard for the liberty and property of a poor infatuated people, labors to deter them from their proposal, by setting before them the miseries that kings would bring upon them, by aspiring after arbitrary authority and unlimited power, and by tyrannising over them. This God does emphatically and roundly tell them of, by the mouth of Samuel. 1 Sam. viii. 10, 11, &c.' P. 79.

longer incredible, that he purposed to foretell almost the extirpation of a great people. But far was his character from harmonizing with such an interpretation of his words and his expectations. Conversant in a wide range of literary enquiry, furnished with a mind discerning and comprehensive, animated with a warm zeal for the freedom of mankind, educated in the *republic* of Holland, exasperated by the conduct of the royal party in Scotland, by whom his father had been persecuted and imprisoned, and having witnessed a few years since an important political revolution in England; is it greatly to be wondered, if such a man carried his views of government, and his expectations of change in the state of human affairs, to a much greater extent than the generality of his contemporaries?

It here deserves to be mentioned, that Mr. Fleming, in the preface of his *Discourse on the Death of K. William*, has actually cited the opinion of a great French statesman, as worthy of peculiar attention, in the close of which opinion he expressed the probability of a foundation being laid in France for a new revolution, which perhaps might be more universal and more dangerous to the Catholic interest than the Protestant reformation.

The design of Mr. Fleming's *Discourse*, which with its postscript is extended almost to the length of 180 pages, is to trace the rise and fall of the Papacy. When it was his favorite object to prove the certainty of the latter event, an event from which he never suffers his eye long to be withdrawn; surely it cannot be supposed, that he had employed himself in laboring to prove the future establishment of that despotism, which instinctively attempts to strengthen itself by the aid of ecclesiastical authority; and which, in France, would assuredly be attended by the restoration of Popery.

But neither the character of Mr. Fleming, nor the general tenor of his discourse, affords so decisive a proof of the meaning which he intended to convey, as the words which he has selected. Of his interpreters some, however, appear not so much to have attended to these, as to their own wishes on the subject.

When the author of the *Discourse on the Rise and Fall of the Papacy* taught, without hesitation, that the fourth vial was a clear prophecy of considerable events, which would be injurious to the Roman Catholic religion, and when he apprehended that about the year 1794 this vial would have received its full accomplishment; he can never be supposed to give countenance to the idea, that such Catholic princes as those of Austria, of Sardinia, and of Spain, would about that time succeed against a country, which has emancipated itself from papal influence and episcopal exaction; he can never be suspected of encouraging the expectation, that the year 1794 would be distinguished by the triumphant return of the clerical orders, by the restitution of their immense revenues, and the compulsory enforcement of their unscriptural dogmata<sup>7</sup>.

When, in language direct and unambiguous, he declares that the pouring out of the fourth vial is directed against some eminent potentates, who support the Papal cause, and that it must be principally understood of the humiliation of the houses of Austria and Bourbon; I cannot conceive, by what unheard of rules of interpretation such expressions as these can be conceived to foretell *the successful efforts* of the princes of Bourbon and Austria; efforts which would doubtless be attended by the triumph of Popery<sup>7</sup>, to increase the

7 If authority is wanted for what is asserted in the places referred to above, the following is as complete as the nature of the case will admit. Monsieur, in his public declaration as Regent of France (published at Ham in Westphalia, Jan. 28, 1793) after mentioning the powerful aid to be afforded by the allied sovereigns, and their resolution to re-establish the ancient government of France, says, ‘We will likewise exert ourselves in the restoration of the religion of our forefathers to its original purity, according to the canonical discipline of the church. We also promise to reinstate all and every description of persons in the full enjoyment of their property, now usurped; and in the free exercise of their lawful rights, of which they have been illegally deprived. In order to enforce the law, we shall punish crimes with severity, and in an exemplary manner.’ If the fugitive princes, at a time when they were dispirited by misfortune, and cheered by only a feeble hope of success, did, notwithstanding, hold a language thus haughty and peremptory, thus bold and explicit, to what a height might they not have been expected to have carried their persecution



splendor of which the flame of persecution would on every side be lighted up. Equally am I at a loss to discover, how these words of our divine are proved to be applicable, not to the prince on the throne, but to the great mass of the people. When he strongly expresses his expectation, not only that the monarchy in France will be greatly humbled, but declares that it will at length be consumed, I am completely unable to imagine, to what arguments they can have recourse, who profess themselves to be of opinion, that the words of Mr. Fleming speak a language *favorable* to the re-establishment of the French monarchy, the baleful influence of which he was accustomed to deplore, whilst, with an indignant eye, he viewed its recent and unrelinquished efforts to introduce into England tyranny and the house of Stuart. Various have been the critical canons for the explication of authors. But to represent, that a writer means directly the opposite of what he says, is rather a novel mode of interpretation. Is there not reason to suspect, that he, who models his decisions by such a rule as this, has been conversant with courts, rather than with books? For, happily, numerous as are the faults of authors, insincerity and falsehood are not their characteristic vices.

Those who profess to believe, that the effusion of the fourth vial predicts events hostile to the interests of the French nation; that it favors the idea of the conquest of France, the restoration of the Bourbons, and the consequent re-establishment of the Roman Catholic religion, profess an opinion, not only destitute of the support of any of the commentators, but which stands in direct contradiction to the whole tenor of their interpretations. That all the vials foretold events injurious to the kingdom of Antichrist is the opinion of all the Protestant commentators<sup>8</sup>;

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and their despotism, supposing it possible that they should have eventually triumphed? That such phrases as *purity of religion* and *lawful rights*, in the vocabulary of tyrants, altogether lose their import, scarcely any reader needs to be reminded.

8 The following rule Mede lays down as incontrovertibly certain. Whatever it be upon which each of the vials is poured out, it suffers from the



and the kingdom of Antichrist has justly been regarded as including the usurpations of civil, as well as ecclesiastical, tyranny. 'The vials,' says Bengelius, 'break the power of *the beast*, and of all that are in union with him<sup>9</sup>.'

By a late writer, Mr. Bicheno, ANTICHRIST is thus defined. '*It is all that which opposes itself to the kingdom of Christ, whether it flow from the ecclesiastical or civil powers*: The civil constitutions of nations, as well as the ecclesiastical, so far as they accord with or have a tendency to promote that pride and that ambition, which lead to oppression, persecution, and war, are ANTICHRISTIAN.' And it is an important observation of the judicious Dr. Sykes, that 'the present state of things is represented always in the New Testament as the state of Antichrist<sup>10</sup>.' By a Scotch commentator on the Apocalypse, Mr. Robertson, Antichrist is defined, 'whatever sets itself in opposition to the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ<sup>11</sup>.' Even bishop Hurd's definition is, in itself, sufficiently comprehensive, had he afterwards thought proper to apply it in its full extent. 'Antichrist,' says the prelate, 'stands for a person or power, actuated with a spirit opposite to that of Christ<sup>12</sup>.'

If, as there is reason to believe, it be the object of the seven vials to destroy the *two-horned beast*, the representative of the Antichristian priesthood, and the *ten horns* of the civil *beast*; it surely is extremely natural, that the design of one of these vials should be to cut off one of the most powerful and oppressive of these horns, the despotic monarchy of France.

When the words of Mr. Fleming are so decidedly hostile to the views of tyrants in general, and of Catholic despots in particular, it will perhaps be asked; where was the danger of their being misapplied? It may be answered,

vial damage and injury; since the pouring out of the vials is the pouring out of the wrath of God, (ch. xv. 1.) No interpretation then can here stand its ground, according to which the effusion of the vial turns out to the advantage of that upon which it is poured.' P. 656.

9 P. 204.

10 On the Truth of Chr. 1725. p. 172.

11 P. 189.

12. Vol. II. p. 10.

that this has actually happened. Nor is this any ground for surprise. If passages are incorrectly quoted; if they are misrepresented with industry, and perused with prepossession; frequently will it happen, that they will be the supposed vehicle of sentiments, of which the original author entertained not the most distant idea. The mass of mankind judge not for themselves. From the fatigue of thinking they are eager to be relieved. With the opinion of the first acquaintance they meet, too readily do they coalesce, though that acquaintance may probably have some private interest to serve. And it is with regret I observe, that, for some time past, the friends of freedom have not exerted so much activity in the counteraction of sentiments unfavorable to the liberties of my country, as placemen and pensioners and expectants, with their widely-extending connections, have in their propagation.

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## CHAPTER II.

FARTHER REMARKS ON THE FOURTH VIAL, AND MR. FLEMING'S  
INTERPRETATION OF IT.

CONSCIOUS of having been diffuse in the elucidation of Mr. Fleming's *general* import, I proceed, without farther delay, to the consideration of *particular* passages. At the first glance, some readers will perhaps understand the words of Mr. Fleming, as denoting only the *humiliation* of the Gallic monarchy. But upon comparing pages 68 and 74, the language employed by him will be seen strongly to countenance the idea, that he entertained the expectation, that the oppressive monarchy would at *one* period be considerably humbled, whilst it would, at a *subsequent* time, be destroyed.—‘The French monarchy,’ says he, ‘will **ITSELF CONSUME**;—its fire, and that which is the fuel that maintains it, wasting insensibly, till it be exhausted at last towards the end of this century.’ Now a question here

occurs, what does this *fuel* signify? That the monarchy itself would be extinguished, when the *fuel* which *maintained* the sun, the emblem of monarchy, should have spent all its force, there is no difficulty in conceiving: but the metaphor, though naturally suggested by the symbol of the sun, and kept up with propriety, is not eminent for precision.

It may perhaps be designed to denote that servility of popular opinion, that BLIND ATTACHMENT TO THE PERSON AND OFFICE OF THE MONARCH, which formerly burned with such a steadiness and ardor in the bosoms of the natives of France. But when the mysteries and crimes of a tyrannic administration had been gradually developed, when the labours of men of letters had reflected a light upon the abstract principles of government: that adulatory spirit, no longer kept alive by national ignorance, began *insensibly to waste* away. Being thus deprived of that fuel of which it had hitherto received a copious supply, and being in consequence subjected (in the year 1789) to a fatal eclipse, the sun of the French monarchy has probably for ever set; no longer destined to scorch the defenceless millions that inhabit one of the fairest portions of the globe. The flame of adulation is now extinct; and the expiring embers of the loyalty of Frenchmen have found a last refuge among a feeble remnant of armed insurgents or of scattered exiles.

But perhaps *the fuel* of our author may be a strong metaphor to express THE PRIVILEGED ORDERS, who may be said to have almost constituted the vital principle of the Gallic monarchy. In proportion as the influence of the ecclesiastics and the noblesse *wasted away*, in proportion as they abandoned the kingdom in larger crowds, eager to undermine or to assault that new edifice of government, which the skilful industry of the constituent assembly had erected on so grand a scale, the pillars of royalty itself were more and more shaken; and 'the Corinthian capital of society' having been completely demolished, the monarchical part of the fabric, notwithstanding the substantial repairs it had recently received, was levelled with the ground.

Or *the fuel* of the French monarchy may be intended to represent THE REVENUES OF THE STATE, which impart, to every monarchy, firmness and vigour. When levied without opposition, and with a rigid exactness, they constitute indeed the very sinews of despotism.—This was *the fire*, to again pursue one of the metaphors of our author, the materials of which were originally gathered from every quarter of the empire, from the cottage of the peasant and the shop of the manufacturer: but which, being concentrated at Paris, at Versailles, or at Chantilly, blazed forth in useless magnificence and with a steady brightness; or, being transported beyond the Gallic frontier, enabled the royal incendiary to kindle the flames of war, and to light up in the towns of the Netherlands or of Germany a general conflagration, whilst himself, exempt from the hazard of being scorched by the fury with which it raged, surveyed, calmly and at a distance, the progress of the mischief he had created.

If *this* were the fuel, which our author foretold would be exhausted towards the close of the present century, completely has the event corresponded with his expectations. When the finances, in consequence of the peculation, introduced into the collection of the taxes, as well as the prodigality of the court of Versailles, and the ruinous wars in which it had engaged, became by little and little more deeply embarrassed; when the grievances of the people, from a long series of oppressions, became at length so complicated and heavy, as to call aloud for redress, to generate a general disaffection, and to render the reduction of the imposts a measure which no ministerial efforts could avert or postpone; in short, when the revenue had so *insensibly wasted away*, that its amount proved greatly inferior to the annual expenditure<sup>1</sup>, and to the payment of the national debt; it

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1 'In this exigency,' says Mr. Mackintosh, 'there was no expedient left, but to guarantee the ruined credit of bankrupt despotism by the sanction of the national voice.' *Def. of the Fr. Rev.* p. 23. From the official account of M. de Calonne, delivered to the Notables in April, 1787, and since published in his book against the Fr. Rev. we learn, that the annual



was at this emergency, it was at this moment of dilemma to which happily despotism was reduced, that Louis XVI. was OBLIGED to establish an unfettered liberty of the press, to disclose the desperately disordered state of the finances, and reluctantly to assent to the convocation of the States-General of the kingdom : events, which laid an immediate foundation for the radical revolution which speedily followed. The stream of national wealth, which had been wont to flow into the coffers of royalty, it was then thought proper in a great degree to turn a different way ; and, at the present period, even the acknowledged magnificence of the French monarchy possesses not, in the judgment of a republican Frenchman, any attractive lustre, since it requires to be maintained by a perpetual renewal of fresh supplies of revenue, and would drain every channel in which the riches of the state are accustomed to circulate.

It may be asked, whether if Mr. Fleming had foretold, in language altogether explicit and equivocal, the total downfall of monarchy, in a country so near and so extensive as France, the idea would not have been likely to have rendered him unpopular among that party in which he had enlisted himself, the whigs of that time, the zealous supporters of the throne of king William ?

On the meaning of Mr. Fleming's metaphor of fuel, it was allowable to indulge conjecture. But, in explaining *the symbols of the prophets*, a far different conduct must be pursued. No loose must be given to imagination. It will be proper to enquire, not what *may be* the meaning of any particular symbol, and what will best correspond to any particular hypothesis, but what is its *actual* and fixed signification.

Thus, as the symbolic meaning of *the sun* is an hinge upon which the interpretation of the fourth vial in a great degree turns, it is necessary to enquire, what is the accept-

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*deficit* amounted to 115 millions of livres, or about 4,750,000*l.* This is the government, conducted with such boundless extravagance, over the downfall of which a numerous band of English senators and nobility have so feelingly lamented.



ation it elsewhere bears in the Apocalypse, and in what manner it is there understood by the commentators. But as the discussion of this subject may, with more advantage, be incorporated into a future chapter, it will be here sufficient, concisely to cite the opinions of a few of the expositors, and to assure the reader, that commentators agree in interpreting the darkening of *the third part of the sun*, mentioned in ch. viii. of St. John, v. 12. of the destruction of a monarchy. But, that the effusion of this vial threatens only a single monarchy, I would by no means take upon me to assert.

The remarks which follow have been made upon the fourth vial, and relate to this symbol in particular.—‘ This prophecy,’ says Mr. Parker, ‘ is predictive of some heavy judgment which is to fall on the symbolic sun ; and *the sun*—fitly here designeth some king or state, even as’ it elsewhere does<sup>2</sup>. ‘ It may,’ says a yet earlier commentator, Mr. Cotton of New England, ‘ denote some chief governor in the antichristian state, of eminent lustre<sup>3</sup>.’ This vial, says Dr. Thos. Goodwin, is prophetic of the ruin of some eminent potentate. I now cite his words : ‘ *The sun* here (according to the third premise or rule given) may be put for the more illustrious light, or prince, adhering to the Popish party, and shining in his political heaven<sup>4</sup>.’ ‘ *The sun*,’ says Paganus, ‘ in the world of the papacy, is the greatest potentate of that religion.’ To the same purpose speaks Joseph Mede. ‘ This emblem,’ says Vitringa, ‘ represents to us some powerful prince, or a number of princes of the same kind, shining with great splendor in the world of the beast.’ That it points not at all to the Roman pontiff, he declares himself fully persuaded. That he has however been included in the explanation of this vial, will appear from the following citation. ‘ By *the sun* here we are to understand,’ says an annotator of the last cen-

<sup>2</sup> Master Robert Parker on the Fourth Vial, 1650. p. 6.

<sup>3</sup> Mr. John Cotton on the Seven Vials, 1645. p. 58.

<sup>4</sup> P. 99.

ture, ' the emperor of Germany, the French king, and the pope of Rome, who are the great lights in the Roman Papal kingdom<sup>5</sup>.'

This annotator's interpretation, had he omitted the pontiff, would have coincided with that of Mr. Fleming ; since the latter declares, and his words have already been cited, that the fourth vial, ' must be principally understood of the houses of Austria and Bourbon.'

An earlier writer than Mr. Fleming, the learned Dr. Cressener, though materially differing from him in his explication of the fourth vial, did, on some points, perfectly coincide with him. ' This vial,' says Dr. Cressener, ' is a severe judgment on the Roman Catholic party : ' *the sun*, he declares, is to be understood of ' the king of France, who is so considerable in Europe, as to go under the name of Louis the Great ;' and who, as the doctor observes in a subsequent page, ' is in so eminent a manner the greatest potentate in Europe, and is every where known by the name of the Most Christian King, for his eminency in the Roman party.' ' It is,' says this writer, ' not a little remarkable, that the French court should be so extremely fond of the figure of *the sun*, for their king's device<sup>6</sup>, so as even to stamp it upon the public coin, and should be so zealous in the defence of the propriety of it against all opposers<sup>7</sup>.'

5 An Expos. of the Rev. by H. K. 1689.

6 Of the motto to this device, *nec pluribus impar*, it is observed by Voltaire, that it has not ' a meaning sufficiently clear and determinate. ' This device had,' however he says, ' extraordinary success. The royal furniture and coats of arms, as well as the tapestry and sculptures of the palaces, were all adorned with it.' *Le Siecle de Louis XIV.* ch. 25. With a reference to this device, the following story may be related. When the earl of Stair was ambassador to the court of Berlin, it was agreed at a diplomatic dinner to give symbolical toasts. Whilst the French ambassador gave the sun, as the well-known representative of his master, the Spanish minister, finding the sun disposed of, was obliged to satisfy himself with giving the next great luminary the moon, as emblematic of the king of Spain. Lord Stair being next called upon to give a representation of the king of England, said, ' Well then, I will give Joshua, the sun of Nun, who made both the sun and the moon stand still.'

7 Judg. upon the R. C. p. 207, 242.

However diffusive, the remarks hitherto made on the fourth vial are imperfect. Of this prophecy one branch remains unexamined. If v. 8 *be* admitted to be a prediction of the downfall of the Gallic monarchy, the following verse, as constituting a part of it, will probably be regarded as foretelling the calamities of the supporters of that monarchy, and particularly of those among them, who emigrated from France, with the design of co-operating together for its re-establishment.

The 9th v. is thus expressed: *And men were scorched with great heat<sup>8</sup>, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues; and they repented not, to give him glory. To be scorched with great heat, is to suffer great calamity. To blaspheme the name of God, as Theodoret and Suicerus observe, is to cast reproaches against God<sup>9</sup>; and this is done from a dissatisfaction at the events which his providence permits or appoints. And can it be doubted, whether the emigrants of France, and all who stood forwards in that country as the zealous supporters of its monarchy, have been exposed to the most poignant calamities? Can it be doubted, whether many of them, strangers to that spirit of resignation which the gospel inculcates, have not, in fact, blasphemed the name of God, who alone hath power over these plagues; and whether they have not loudly murmured at the severity of his chastisements and the dispensations of his providence?*

But, on a cursory perusal of the verse, some possibly may apprehend, that *to blaspheme the name of God*, is *to make an open profession of infidelity, or of atheism*; and having assumed this as the meaning of the words, may conceive that the verse admits of the best application to

8 i. e. Says Lowman (in loc.) ‘they were greatly afflicted.’ Accordingly, Dr. Lancaster has not omitted to observe, that *heat* is a symbol of tribulation.

9 In our New Testaments, *Βλασφημεω* is translated not only *to blaspheme*, but *to rail*, *to revile*, and *to speak evil of*. Thus Mr. Wakefield translates the clause I am considering: *and they reviled the name of that God, who hath power over these punishments.*

the *whole* of the French nation. If, however, the expression should be thought to have this import, a supposition which I believe to be groundless; still I maintain, that it may be applied with far greater propriety to the French emigrants in particular, than to the people of France in general. The royalists who emigrated from that country have, to use the metaphor of the prophet, not only been *scorched with great heat*, they have not only been overtaken by the most signal misfortunes; but *the infidelity* of a large portion of them is a fact of public notoriety. It was among those who abandoned France, with the hope of annihilating its liberties; it was among the noblesse, the satellites of the court, the officers of the army, and the dignified ecclesiastics, that the gloomy sentiments of infidelity had made the widest progress. With these principles the great body of the people were assuredly far less tainted. It is added, in the verse quoted above, that the men, who were exposed to *the plagues* inflicted by the command of heaven, *repented not*. To many of the French emigrant-royalists this clause also may be aptly applied. Those who were infidels in the days of their prosperity continue so still. That benevolent providence, which superintended the commencement of the French revolution, they were little disposed to acknowledge. Upon their former scenes of riotous indulgence, upon their past acts of aristocratic violence, they cast a look, not of penitence, but of desire. Instead of *repenting* the long series of oppressions, which they had exercised upon the unprivileged ranks of society; instead of *giving God glory* for the changes which had taken place in France, so extensively favorable to the happiness of mankind<sup>10</sup>; instead of endeavoring to make some compensation for that diffusive misery, which their luxurious indolence had contributed to extend and establish; thousands of them set every engine at work to accomplish the ruin of their coun-

10 It should be remembered, that when the great body of the emigrants quitted France, small were the excesses, and very inconsiderable the disunion, which the friends of freedom had reason to lament.



try; with an equal degree of malignity and of impolicy, they incited foreign despots to the invasion and plunder of the French territories; with an ill-directed industry they scattered over all the European countries narratives of events, often fabricated, always unfaithful: whilst others, of a bolder cast, with the torch and the sword in their hands, passed the limits of the French frontier, and perpetrating crimes at which humanity must recoil, labored, as far as depended on their efforts, to realize the threats of a manifesto, which tyranny had recently written in characters of blood, as an authentic, undisguised memorial of its genuine feelings and its genuine desires. Change of fortune has operated little change on their dispositions. Mr. Christie, speaking of the 'emigrant princes and their adherents in Germany,' says, 'Observe what kind of life they led there. Exposed to the greatest dangers, and to the chance of losing all that was dear to them in life, they were unable to forget the dissipation of the ancient court: they revived in exile all its follies and all its vices. Coblenz became a miniature of Versailles; and the men who had their character, their fortune, their life itself at stake, were occupied, just as they used to be at the old court, in intrigues, and quarrelling about mistresses<sup>11</sup>.'

That persons of such a character should incur the most signal judgments of heaven needs not to excite any surprise. Upon their heads the vials of the divine wrath might be expected to be poured with an unsparing hand. But all the emigrants correspond not with this description; and some have been reserved for a milder destiny. Many preserved themselves untarnished by the conspiracy at Coblenz; and, flying to a country at that time neutral, by the liberality of a generous nation have had their sufferings softened. But even of this class of emigrants, not a few have indulged the vainest expectations. That the new republican constitution, however strongly it may be ratified by the convention and by the people, will prove a fabric

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11 Letters from France, vol. IV. p. 258.



airy and unsubstantial, they have been little disposed to doubt. Though in the moment of divesting their sentiments of disguise, some of them may have admitted, that it resembles the spreading arch, which sometimes decorates the sky, in beauty, in regularity, and in the amplitude of the scale on which it is constructed ; yet have they been of opinion, that the principal point of similitude is its transitory nature, and the short extent of time which it is destined to exist. When the political horizon of France was overcast with clouds, too many of them were ready to flatter themselves with the hope, that the storm, after desolating the extreme borders of the country, would take a general sweep ; and, whilst it discharged itself with a fury which admitted not of resistance, that the splendid illusion of a representative government, whatever brilliancy it might have acquired from the concentration of the scattered rays of legislative wisdom, and however generally it might have been viewed with an admiring eye, would at length vanish amid the thunder of war and the gloom of despotism. But surely those of them, who have cherished expectations to this extent, and have been eager to purchase a return to their country by its sacrifice to the despotism of the old monarchy, have afforded no very favorable proof of the goodness either of their judgments or of their hearts.

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## CHAPTER III.

### ON THE AUTHENTICITY OF THE APOCALYPSE.

HAPPY in an opportunity of endeavouring to serve the cause, and to confirm the evidences, of Revelation, and desirous of obviating some of those prejudices, which might otherwise be entertained against the validity of any conclusions grounded upon the Apocalypse ; in this and the succeeding chapter I shall introduce a number of extracts and observations relative to it ; and particularly to its GENUINENESS, its USES, and its OBSCURITY.

Its name bespeaks its importance. It is called *the Apocalypse*<sup>1</sup>, says Vitringa, ‘because it not only describes, by the noblest symbols, the remarkable events of the world and of the church in succession, from the time of Trajan even to the consummation of all things; but it likewise serves as *the seal* and *the key* of all the prophecies of the Old Testament, which more obscurely treat concerning these same transactions.’ Lofty also is the general title prefixed to it. THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST, WHICH GOD GAVE UNTO HIM.

With regard to its genuineness, authorities more respectable than those of NEWTON and of MEDE cannot be cited. It is the declaration of the latter, that ‘the Apocalypse hath MORE HUMAN (not to speak of divine) AUTHORITY than any other book of the NEW TESTAMENT besides, even from the time it was delivered<sup>2</sup>. This opinion Sir Isaac Newton supports at greater length. ‘I do not,’ says he, ‘find any other book of the New Testament so STRONGLY ATTESTED, OR COMMENTED UPON SO EARLY AS THIS.—Justin Martyr, who within thirty years after John’s death became a Christian, writes expressly, that “a certain man among the Christians, whose name was John, one of the twelve apostles of Christ, in the Revelation which was shewed him, prophesied,” &c. and what this primitive father afterwards says relative to the Millennium, does, says Sir I. Newton, amount to this, ‘that ALL true Christians in that early age received this prophecy.—Papias, bishop of Hierapolis, a man of the apostolic age, and one of John’s own disciples, did not only teach the doctrine of the Thousand Years, but also asserted the Apocalypse as written by divine inspiration. Melito, who flourished next after Justin, wrote a commentary upon this prophecy; and he, being bishop of Sardis, one of the seven churches, could neither be ignorant of their tradition about it, nor impose upon them. Irenæus, who was contemporary with

<sup>1</sup> From ἀποκαλύπτω, to open or uncover.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. II. p. 747.

Melito, wrote much upon it, and said, that “ the number 666 was in all the ANCIENT and approved copies ; and that he had it also confirmed to him by those who had seen John face to face<sup>3</sup> ;” meaning, no doubt, his master Polycarp for one. At the same time, Theophilus, bishop of Antioch, asserted it, and so did Tertullian, Clemens Alexandrinus, and Origen soon after ; and their contemporary Hippolytus the martyr, metropolitan of the Arabians, wrote a commentary upon it. All these were ancient men, flourishing within a hundred and twenty years after John’s death, and of the greatest note in the churches of those times.’ ‘ Surely’ adds Sir I. Newton, ‘ this may suffice to shew, how the Apocalypse was received and studied in the first ages<sup>4</sup>.’

Among other primitive commentators on this sacred book was Andrew, bishop of Cesarea, who is supposed to have lived about the close of the fifth century. I now quote from the preface of this ancient work, as translated by Dr. Lardner. He says, “ he needs not to enlarge in proving the inspiration of this book, since many ancients bore testimony to its authority.” Some of the principal of these the bishop of Cesarea enumerates<sup>5</sup>.

Dr. Lardner, speaking of the Apocalypse, says, ‘ Hermas has MANY things resembling it.’ The resemblance indeed is so strong that he appears plainly to have imitated it<sup>6</sup>. Now ‘ the antiquity of the book, called *the Shepherd* or *Pastor* of Hermas is,’ says Dr. Lardner, ‘ manifest and unquestionable.—We cannot, I think, place this piece later than the conclusion of the first century,’ and accordingly

3 Dr. Cressener, speaking of this testimony of Irænaus, says, ‘ there can hardly be given a more unquestionable, or more particular testimony concerning the true author of any book at any distance from the time it was wrote in, than this is. Here is a particular search after all the copies of it, soon after the writing of it, with the concurrent testimony of those who knew the author himself.’ Dem. of the Pr. Appl. of the Apoc. Introd.

4 P. 247.

5 Lardner’s Works, vol. V. p. 250.

6 See Vitranga, p. 378 ; and Lardner, vol. II. p. 50, 61.

he assigns it to the year 100. With respect to the visions of the Revelation, these, says this valuable writer, ‘and the publication of them in this book, *must* be assigned, as far as I can see, to the years of Christ 95 and 96, or 97.’ Thus then does it appear, that there is happily preserved a testimony to the genuineness of the Apocalypse, written only four or five years after that sacred prophecy itself was published.

‘It is a remarkable circumstance,’ says bishop Hallifax, ‘and what perhaps distinguishes the Apocalypse from every other portion of the New Testament, that it was unanimously received as the work of John the Evangelist, by those who lived nearest the time of its publication; without a single person appearing to question its authority<sup>8</sup>.’

‘That St. John was banished into Patmos, in the time of Domitian, in the latter part of his reign, and restored by his successor Nerva, is,’ says Dr. Lardner, ‘the general testimony of ancient authors.—But this book could not be published till after St. John’s release and return to Ephesus in Asia. Now Domitian died in 96, and his persecution did not commence till near the end of his reign.’

‘Concerning his abode in Asia, we have,’ says Dr. Lardner, ‘divers testimonies of good credit.’ Among others, he mentions Irenæus and Polycrates. ‘Irenæus<sup>9</sup>, in two places of his work against heresies, both cited by Eusebius, says, that John the apostle lived in Asia till the time of Trajan, who succeeded Nerva in the year of Christ 98.—Polycrates, bishop of Ephesus, about 196, is an unexceptionable witness; that John was buried in that city<sup>10</sup>.’

‘St. John the apostle,’ I am now quoting from Leonard Twells, ‘was a Jew by birth, and though he had the gift

<sup>7</sup> Lardner, vol. VI. p. 638. The Revelation is placed in the year 96 by Mill and Basnage, by Whiston and Le Clere. 8 P. 197.

<sup>9</sup> Iren. adv. Hær. l. 2. c. 22; et l. 3. c. 3. Irenæus, according to the computation of Dodwell, was born as early as the year 97. *Diss. Irene.* §. sect. 4.

<sup>10</sup> Lardner’s Works, vol. VI. p. 169, 632.



of tongues, like the rest of the apostles, so that he could and did write Greek ; yet it is plain, that in his gospel and epistles penned in that language, he retains the Hebrew and the Syriac idiom. This is so well known and so generally allowed, as to make all particular proof needless : if therefore the style of the Revelations had been different in this respect ; if the expression had been always or even generally pure Greek ; if no footsteps had remained of Hebrew idioms therein, it would have afforded just matter of suspicion, that John the apostle and evangelist was not the author thereof. But the Revelation is free from this objection ; for there are found in it as many, and perhaps more Hebraisms, than in any other book of the New Testament whatever<sup>11</sup>.

It may be seen in Lardner, that the reception of the book of Revelation was not peculiar to the catholic and orthodox Christians. Of the writings of the sectaries little comparatively is preserved ; yet evidence exists, that it was received by the Donatists, the Novatians, and the Manichees.

That in the fourth and fifth centuries its genuineness was, however, doubted, and even denied, by some, needs excite no surprise. For this satisfactory reasons may be assigned. It is to be partly attributed to this prophetic book being at that time in a great degree unintelligible ; and partly to the prevalence of the doctrine of the Millennium, which, as then taught, was altogether wild and incredible<sup>12</sup>. That this was really to be found in the Apocalypse, some were ready too lightly to admit ; in consequence a degree of discredit was inconsiderately attached by some to the prophecy itself ; and it will, without hesitation, be admitted, that had this doctrine, as then represented, been in truth inseparable from the book of Revelation, the sober inquirer would have been authorised in concluding, that the latter could not be authentic and divine.

11 Crit. Exam. of the New Test. part III. p. 10.

12 See Whitby's Treatise on the Millennium.

It is proper to add, that Dionysius, bishop of Alexandria, about the middle of the third century, though he ventured not to deny, that the Apocalypse was a genuine work of an inspired person, or that such person was named John, yet endeavoured to shew, that he was not John, the son of Zebedee and the brother of James, who wrote the three epistles and the gospel, but another, who flourished in the same age, and bore the same name. But St. John, says bishop Hallifax, has ‘said enough to point out, without any uncertainty, who he was,—by describing himself as having been banished to Patmos<sup>13</sup>, for the sake of his religion<sup>14</sup>; a calamity, which, by the consent of all the ecclesiastical historians, confessedly happened to our evangelist.’ As to ‘the diversity of phrase and sentiment, in the Revelation and the other writings of St. John, it has been satisfactorily proved, that this difference is not near so great as Dionysius would represent it; no greater than what may fairly be accounted for from the difference of subject; and particular instances have been alleged, in which there is a remarkable coincidence both of ideas and words, which are *peculiar* to this apostle, and no where used by any other writer of the New Testament<sup>15</sup>.’ In like manner the judicious Jortin observes, that ‘besides ancient testimony, there is also *internal* reason to conclude, that the gospel and the Revelation are the work of the same author<sup>16</sup>.’

Against the Apocalypse it has been farther objected, that it is not to be found in certain lists of the books of scriptures, published in the fourth and fifth centuries. But this circumstance, says bishop Hallifax, will not ‘occasion any difficulty, when you are told, that *the express design* of

13 Rev. i. 9.

14 To the same purpose Leonard Twells. ‘This circumstance not only agrees with the history of John the Evangelist, but is also *peculiar* to him, and marks him out as effectually, as if he had been expressly so called.’ On the Rev. p. 24.

15 P. 205.

16 See his Disc. on the Tr. of the Chr. Rel. p. 209.

those lists was to enumerate such parts of the sacred code as were proper to be read in public, for the edification of Christian assemblies; for which the general obscurity of the Apocalypse, and the small concern it seemed to have with the state of the church in those days, rendered it unfit<sup>17</sup>.

I have stated that, in the primitive ages, the meaning of the greater part of the Apocalypse was inaccessible to inquiry. Yet we learn from ecclesiastical history, that Melito, who in the year 177 presented an apology in behalf of the Christians to the emperor Marcus Antoninus; that Hippolytus, who flourished about the year 220; that Victorinus, who lived somewhat nearer the conclusion of the third century; that Andrew of Cesarea, who is placed by Cave at the year 500; that Cassiodorius, whom the same writer places at the year 514; and that Arethas, who, as he conceives, flourished about the year 540, all composed commentaries on the Revelation<sup>18</sup>. This fact may seem to demand explanation. How, it may be asked, did it happen, that these writers, and doubtless others whose names have not been transmitted to us, engaged in so arduous, and, it may be added, in so hopeless a task, as, at that time, to explain the unaccomplished predictions of so dark a book as the Apocalypse, though most of them had before their eyes the miscarriages of their predecessors? I reply, that this is to be accounted for only upon the supposition, that the evidence of its authenticity was decisive and unquestionable. When, however, they failed, notwithstanding all their efforts, of coming to any probable conclusions respecting the greater part of its contents, it is surely not to be wondered, that at length it began to be studied with less frequency, and by many was treated with neglect.

Leonard Twells discusses, through the space of almost 200 pages, the arguments on the authenticity of the Apocalypse, and declares, that 'either it is a genuine piece, or

17 P. 208.

18 See Lardner's Credib.

nothing in antiquity is so<sup>19</sup>.' Accordingly the Roman Catholics venture not to dispute its authority, adverse as it is to their interests.

I conclude the chapter with a short citation from Vitringa. 'There is nothing grand and surpassing in the prophecies of antecedent times, which has not been gathered together by the Holy Spirit into these visions;' and this complexion of the book is, he declares, 'a most sure criterion of its divine original<sup>20</sup>.'

## CHAPTER IV.

### GENERAL OBSERVATIONS ON THE APOCALYPSE.

HOWEVER undoubted may be the genuineness of the Apocalypse, however decisive may be the evidence of its having been inspired by the God of Heaven, by whatever heights of sublimity it may be characterised; many are disposed to assert, that it deserves not to be studied; because its commentators, on many points, have a wide diversity of opinion<sup>1</sup>. But surely it does not hence follow, that their applications of it to particular events are altogether to be neglected; it does not hence follow, that valuable discoveries and encouraging hopes may not be derived from perusing some parts of it: and it will appear,

19 P. 36. So well authenticated is the Apocalypse, says Mr. Tayler (the author of *Ben Mordecai's Apology*) that if we give it up, we must likewise give up all the other books of the New Testament. Thoughts on the Grand Apostacy, p. 71. 'No book of scripture,' says Dr. Cressener, 'has had a more express and unexceptionable tradition of its apostolical authority.' Dem. of the Prot. Appl. of the Apoc. Introd.

20 P. 20.

1 The learned Dr. Cressener, speaking of those who have interpreted the Apocalypse, says, 'they do almost as generally agree about the first grounds of the interpretation of these visions, as about other books of scripture.' Dem. of the Prot. Appl. of the Apoc. Introd.



upon a minute inquiry, that much of this diversity of interpretation is to be attributed, not to any inherent ambiguity in the Apocalypse itself, but to many of its commentators having been unprepared to illustrate the subject on which they had entered, and especially to their being superficially acquainted with the language of symbols, in which that prophetic work is written. With a reference to this objection, let one of the most masterly of our English writers be cited. ‘Shew me the question in religion, or even in common morals, about which learned men have not disagreed; nay, shew me a single text of scripture, though ever so plain and precise, which the perverseness or ingenuity of interpreters has not drawn into different, and often contrary meanings. What then shall we conclude? That there is no truth in religion, no certainty in morals, no authority in sacred scripture? If such conclusions, as these, be carried to their utmost length, in what else can they terminate, but absolute universal scepticism? To treat the prophetic writings, ‘without the fullest conviction of their falshood, with neglect and scorn, is,’ says the bishop of Worcester, ‘plainly indecent, and may be highly criminal and dangerous.’

But it will perhaps be asked, what are *the ends* which the book of Revelation subserves?—what are *the benefits* which have resulted, or are likely to result, from the study of it? In order to give a full answer to this question, a very wide field of inquiry must be traversed. Here, however, it will be sufficient to touch upon two general and two particular advantages, which have resulted from it.

I. By foretelling events which have occurred several ages subsequent to its publication, the Apocalypse manifests not merely the existence of a deity, but the superintendency of his providence.

II. Written by a disciple of Christ, and containing many predictions relative to the fortunes of his church, predictions which no human foresight could have framed, it fur-

nishes the most convincing evidence of the truth of the religion which he was commissioned to teach.

Thus is it calculated to maintain in the world a reverence both for the Deity and for the Gospel.

III. Notwithstanding the true meaning of the far greater part of it, during the persecutions of Severus, Decius, and Dioclesian, was not to be penetrated at all, and those who then perused it were incapable of explaining any passages in it with precision ; this prophecy nevertheless served to animate the hope, and to fortify the constancy, of the primitive Christians ; since a very imperfect acquaintance with it was sufficient to shew, that it predicted the overthrow of the Roman empire, as well as the perpetuity of the Christian religion. It should also be remembered, that every aid, every encouragement, was of signal importance, at a time when the inventive malice of their enemies presented to their view death in its most frightful and diversified forms ; at a time when an infant religion had to struggle with the pride of philosophy and the prejudice of the vulgar, with the multiplied arts of the priesthood and the formidable power of the state<sup>4</sup>.

IV. Since the denunciation against the church of Rome, included under the figure of Babylon, as antichristian and idolatrous, is one of the clearest and most prominent parts of this sacred prophecy, and since it expressly commands men to separate from her ; it encouraged the authors of the Protestant reformation to commence and to prosecute those important changes, which they might otherwise perhaps have been intimidated from attempting, or might have attempted without success. Not to mention the virulence of that external opposition, under the weight of which they were sometimes on the point of being crushed, a separation from the visible head of the church, under the dreaded appellation of SCHISM, was represented as the most inexpiable of crimes ; and such were the prejudices of the times, that it was almost universally admitted to be criminal, and the

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4 See bishop Newton, vol. III. p. 325.

most undaunted of the reformers, even Luther himself, shrunk from the charge<sup>5</sup>. But an examination of the Apocalypse enabled them to repel it, and furnished them with the most powerful weapons, for conducting an attack against the see of Rome with vigor and success. On every side, indeed, they loudly appealed to the predictions of the Christian prophet, as authorising their conduct; multitudes acknowledged the validity of their appeal; and bp. Hurd hesitates not to assert, that ‘on this popular ground, chiefly, the Protestant cause, in those early times, was upheld<sup>6</sup>.’ If then the Protestant reformation was chiefly, or only in a great degree, supported by arguments drawn from the Apocalypse (which at that period became an object of general investigation, in how high a degree are we indebted to that prophetic part of the New Testament; for to this revolution, imperfect as it was, we unquestionably owe, not only the promotion of civil as well as religious liberty: not only the knowledge of scripture and of genuine Christianity; not only the spread of light and science; but to this great event are justly to be attributed a considerable portion of the virtue, the liberality, and the civilization, which prevail in the European world!

But it is a future period, which is destined to bear the amplest testimony to the usefulness of the Apocalypse, ‘Other proofs,’ says the bishop of Worcester, ‘are supposed to be, and, in some degree, perhaps, are weakened by a length of time. But this from prophecy, as if to make amends for their defects, hath the peculiar privilege of strengthening by age itself<sup>7</sup>.’ May it not then be expected, that the progress of events, and the successive labors of commentators, will hereafter throw so strong a light upon the predictions of St. John, as to produce a change in the minds of men, and, by materially influencing their conduct, to accelerate the accomplishment of those happy events, the prospect of which at present appears confused and indistinct.

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<sup>5</sup> See Hurd, vol. II. p. 46—51.

<sup>6</sup> Vol. II. p. 48.

<sup>7</sup> Hurd, vol. II. p. 203.

‘This prophecy,’ Bengelius beautifully observes, ‘is like a cloud richly full of fructifying rain which spreads over a large extent of land, which sheds some part of its waters on every ground in its turn by specks or spots. What belongs to each particular time, the believers of that age may turn to their advantage in a special manner<sup>8</sup>.’

Containing, as it does, the mysteries of divine providence, the destiny of the Roman empire, the rise and fall of the kingdom of Antichrist, and the subsequent universality of the religion of Jesus, ‘none,’ says an ingenious expositor of the book of Revelation, ‘ought to be discouraged from studying it by the darkness wherewith it is enveloped<sup>9</sup>.’ That its predictions are veiled under a profusion of imagery, there need indeed be no hesitation in admitting<sup>10</sup>. But it is not for a creature like man, limited as he is in duration and in intellect, to point out *all* or the *principal*, reasons, which determined the divine mind to invest these predictions with a degree of darkness. Objections of this kind against the prophecies, says bp. Hurd, ‘are addressed not only to the *ignorance*, as we say, of the disputant, but to an ignorance clearly *invincible* by all the powers of human reason<sup>11</sup>.’ Some of the supposed causes of this obscurity may, however, be investigated, provided they are investigated with modesty.

‘There is,’ as Mr. Lowman observes, a ‘wise reason, why the persons and events described in this prophecy should—remain with some uncertainty as to a particular application<sup>12</sup>.’ Otherwise princes might adopt measures, as the Roman emperors for instance might have done, to obstruct the accomplishment of events injurious to them; and might unseasonably interpose to destroy those, whom

<sup>8</sup> P. 124.

<sup>9</sup> Pref. to the translation of an anonymous French work, entitled, *A New System of the Apocalypse*.

<sup>10</sup> And what follows from this being admitted? Not, says Vitringa, that it should be thrown aside unread, but that it should be studied with augmented diligence. *Pref.*

<sup>11</sup> Vol. I. p. 22.

<sup>12</sup> Pref. p. 39.



Heaven has raised up for the execution of its purposes. By Jurieu obscurity of prophecy is in a similar manner accounted for<sup>13</sup>. 'If God,' says a divine of Scotland, 'had revealed the future various revolutions of the church in a perspicuous manner, then human liberty, or the freedom of the will, would have been greatly limited; so that there could not have been such a proper trial of the worth of human actions as in the present case<sup>14</sup>.' But 'by throwing some part of the predicted event into shade' (to use the language of bp. Hurd) 'the moral faculties of the agents have their proper play, and the guilt of an intended opposition to the will of Heaven is avoided<sup>15</sup>.' Besides, to have rendered the light of prophecy so strong, as to have compelled our assent, would have superseded that diligence of inquiry which is required of us, and would have ill accorded with the state in which the Deity has thought fit to place us; a state of discipline and of difficulty, intended by exercising our virtue, to heighten and confirm it, and to prepare us for entering upon a subsequent stage of existence.

'Had the purpose of prophecy been to shew merely that a predicted event was foreseen, then the end had been best answered by throwing all possible evidence into the completion. But its concern being to shew this to such only as should be disposed to admit a reasonable degree of evidence, it was not necessary, or rather it was plainly not fit, that the completion should be seen in that strong and irresistible light<sup>16</sup>.'

'The prophetic writings are so constructed, as to be not obvious or obtrusive on the inattentive; but to excite and reward the diligence of honest and religious inquiry. Perhaps, too, they are purposely adapted to explore our candor and probity, by the difficulties which occur in them,

13 See Suppl. to his introd. and vol. II. p. 39.

14 An Ess. on some Important Passages of the Rev. Dr. Lauchlan Taylor, A. M. Edinburgh, 1770.

15 Vol. I. p. 55.

16 Hurd, vol. I. p. 84.

which give offence to superficial and irreligious minds; not advertent to that judicious principle, that he, who believes the scripture to have proceeded from him who is the author of nature, may well expect to find the same sort of difficulties in it, which are found in the constitution of nature. And he who denies the scripture to have been from God upon account of these difficulties, may, for the very same reason, deny the world to have been formed by him <sup>17</sup>.'

But symbolical language, the prime source of prophetic obscurity, was used, not only because a degree of obscurity was expedient, but because it was a mode of communicating ideas, particularly prevalent among mankind, and generally approved. This was especially the case in *Judæa* and the *East*, and at the *time* when the Hebrew prophecies were promulgated, the model upon which the Apocalypse was formed. What, asks bishop Hurd, was 'more natural,' than that a style of expression 'which was employed in the theology of the Eastern world, in its poetry, its philosophy, and all the sublimer forms of composition; what wonder, I say, that this customary, this authorised, this admired strain of language, should be that in which the sacred writers conveyed their highest and most important revelations to mankind <sup>18</sup>?'

'Symbolic figures,' says Vitringa, 'if they are constructed with judgment and felicity of adaptation, as truly those of the Apocalypse are most beautiful, keep the mind of the reader in suspense, and serve as a stimulant to his attention and curiosity <sup>19</sup>.'

Besides, those are fundamentally mistaken, who apprehend, that the symbols of the prophets are not only difficult to be understood, but that they are altogether vague and indeterminate. On the contrary, as bp. Hurd observes, the symbolic language is reducible to rule, and 'is constructed on such principles as make it the subject of just criticism and rational interpretation <sup>20</sup>.'

17 Apthorp. vol. I. p. 54.

18 Vol. II. p. 87.

19 In Apoc. p. 223.

20 Vol. II. p. 90.

To render the force of many authorities hereafter to be cited the more conspicuous, some passages, of much greater length, shall be extracted from the ingenious discourses of the bishop of Worcester. 'The prophetic style' was constructed 'on the symbolic principles of the hieroglyphics'<sup>21</sup>; which were not vague uncertain things, but fixed and constant analogies, determinable in their own nature, or from the steady use that was made of them; and a language, formed on such principles, may be reasonably interpreted upon them<sup>22</sup>.' Now what are the means of interpreting it?

I. 'Some light may be expected to arise from the study of the prophecies themselves. For the same symbols, or figures, occur frequently in those writings: and by comparing one passage with another; the darker prophecies with the more perspicuous: the unfulfilled, with such as have been completed; and those which have their explanation annexed to them, with those that have not; by this course of inquiry, I say, there is no doubt but some considerable progress may be made in fixing the true and proper meaning of this mysterious language.'

<sup>21</sup> That it should have been so constructed, may to us, with our local prejudices, appear strange. But it is to be remembered (I now cite from bp. Hurd, vol. II. p. 85.) that 'the Egyptians cultivated the hieroglyphic species of writing with peculiar diligence; while the antiquity, the splendor, the fame, of that mighty kingdom excited a veneration for it in the rest of the world:' and that 'the Israelites, especially, who had their breeding in that country, at the time when the hieroglyphic learning was at its height, carried this treasure with them, among their other spoils, into the land of Canaan.' Neither let it be forgotten, that hieroglyphics are founded on nature, and have prevailed in parts of the world, the most distant from each other. 'Not only the Chinese of the East,' says Dr. Warburton, 'the Mexicans of the West, and the Egyptians of the South, but the Scythians likewise of the North (not to speak of those intermediate inhabitants of the earth, the Indians, Phenicians, Ethiopians, Etruscans, &c.) ALL used the same way of writing by picture and hieroglyphic.' *Divine Legation of Moses*, vol. II. p. 80. Of this volume the bishop of Gloucester has devoted about 140 pages to the subject of hieroglyphics.

<sup>22</sup> Vol. II. p. 90.

II. ‘ Very much of the Egyptian hieroglyphics, on which, as we have seen, the prophetic style was fashioned<sup>23</sup>, may be learned from many ancient records and monuments still subsisting ; and from innumerable hints and passages, scattered through the Greek antiquaries and historians, which have been carefully collected and compared by learned men.’

III. ‘ The pagan superstitions of every form and species, which were either derived from Egypt, or conducted on hieroglyphic notions, have been of singular use in commenting on the Jewish prophets.—But, of all the pagan superstitions, that which is known by the name of *oneirocritics*, or the art of interpreting dreams, is most directly to our purpose. There is a curious treatise on this subject, which bears the name of Achmet, an Arabian writer ; and another by Artemidorus, an Ephesian, who lived about the end of the first century. In the former of these collections (for both works are compiled out of preceding and *very ancient* writers)<sup>24</sup> the manner of interpreting dreams, according to the use of the oriental nations, is delivered ; as the rules, which the Grecian diviners followed, are deduced in the other. For, light and frivolous as this art was, it is not to be supposed that it was taken up at hazard, or could be conducted without rule<sup>25</sup>.—But the rules, by which both

23 ‘ The prophetic style seems to be a speaking hieroglyphic.’ Warburton, p. 142.

24 That principal part of Achmet, relating to the Egyptian oneirocritics, appears, says Mede, to have been collected from an author, who lived when Egypt possessed its own kings, under the name of Pharaoh, p. 560. Now Egypt was reduced into a province of Persia by the son of Cyrus above 500 years before the Christian era.

25 The frivolity of this art will now scarcely be disputed. Yet, from many of the wisest heathens, did it receive countenance ; and we are informed by Cicero (*de Divin.* I. 25) that Socrates and Xenophon and Aristotle all entertained a firm belief, that in dreams the events of futurity were sometimes disclosed. We are not therefore to wonder, that, on the art of interpreting them, books were written, with great care, and on fixed principles. But I am rather surprised, that one of the most judicious of modern writers should have given it as his opinion (Jortin’s *Rem. on Ecclesiastical Hist.* vol. I. p. 123) that the predictions by dreams, recorded by pagan writers, ‘ should not be totally rejected.



the Greek and Oriental diviners justified their interpretations, appear to have been formed on *symbolic principles*, that is, on the very same ideas of analogy by which the Egyptian hieroglyphics (now grown venerable and even sacred) were explained. So that the prophetic style, which is all over painted with hieroglyphic imagery, receives an evident illustration from these two works.'

'Nor is any sanction, in the mean time, given—to the pagan practice of divining by dreams. For, though the same symbols be interpreted in the same manner, yet the *prophecy* doth not depend on the *interpretation*, but the *inspiration* of the dream.' The learned prelate afterwards adds: 'it follows, that the rules, which the ancient diviners observed in explaining symbolic dreams, may be safely and justly applied to the interpretation of symbolic prophecies.'

'And now from these several sources;—such a vocabulary of the prophetic terms and symbols may be, nay, hath been, drawn up, as serves to determine the sense of them in the same manner, as any common art or language is explained by its own proper key or dictionary; and there is, in truth, no more difficulty in fixing the import of the prophetic style, than of any other language or technical phraseology whatsoever<sup>26</sup>.' The vocabulary, which the bishop of Worcester has spoken of in terms thus high, and in the accuracy of which he places so strong a confidence, is, he informs us, Dr. Lancaster's *Symbolical and Alphabetical Dictionary*; which is prefixed to his abridgment of Daubuz's Commentary; and is corroborated by abundance of authorities, sacred and profane. Its date is 1730. Its value to the student of prophecy it would be difficult to estimate too highly.

A recurrence to the oneirocritics, says Dr. More, is alike approved by expositors of the most different sentiments, by Grotius and by Mede<sup>27</sup>. The utility of applying

26 Hurd. Ser. IX.

27 Myst. of Iniq. p. 227.

them to the illustration of scriptural prophecy, no writer has indeed presumed to deny.

On the propriety of symbolic language being employed, I add a few observations from Dr. Johnston, of Holywood. 'Alphabetical characters and words are not natural but only arbitrary signs, and therefore may and do change with the changes of time and of men; but hieroglyphics and symbols are either pictures of things actually existing, or of ideas which these things naturally excite, and therefore not arbitrary but natural signs, fixed and permanent as the things themselves. For the same reason the symbolical is an universal language. Every alphabetical language is local and changeable. For instance the Greek, the Latin, the Italian, the Spanish, the French, and the English languages, were or are each the language of a particular district of territory, and are altogether unintelligible to the illiterate inhabitants of any other district; and they have all undergone such changes, that the language of one period is scarcely intelligible to the inhabitants of the same country in another period of time.' Since then, says he, prophecies are intended for all countries and ages, the symbolical language, being universal and unchangeable, must for such a purpose be the best adapted \* 27.

'The prophecies of this book are,' says Dr. Johnston, 'of that species which is called vision. This is the clearest kind of prophecy. It is like the testimony of the sense of sight. The impressions were made upon the mind of John by the spirit of God, in the same way, and of the same nature with those which would have been made, if he had actually seen with his bodily eyes the very objects themselves, which are represented by the various visions which are narrated in this book.' And 'in whatever manner God communicates his will by inspiration to any man, at any time, we may be certain, that that person *distinctly* perceives what is communicated, and from whom it comes<sup>28</sup>.'

\* 27 Intr. p. 5.

28 Intr. p. 8. and Com. p. 32,

Though Christians well informed on other subjects are to be found, who view the book of Revelation with a very suspicious eye ; yet even they, as well as others, are often led to form this ill opinion of it, very unreasonably, and on the slightest grounds. They take up the Apocalypse without the auxiliary knowledge which is necessary ; read it over either in whole or in part ; and finding that *they* do not understand it, pronounce it to be useless and incapable of being understood. They act just as rationally, as if a man were to take into his hands Horace or Cicero ; as if he should gravely read over a number of pages, though ignorant of the meaning of the far greater part of the words, and omitting to make the slightest use of a dictionary ; and from his inability in any degree to develop the meaning or the connection, should rise from his task with disgust, and then peremptorily decide, that what he had perused of the great Roman poet or Roman orator was a piece of senseless jargon, destitute of worth, and bidding defiance to every attempt at explication. The works of Cicero and Horace are written in the language of the age and country in which they lived ; the Apocalypse is composed in the language appropriate to prophecy, the language of symbols : and before we can penetrate the meaning either of the classical or the prophetic writer, the diction they employ must be studied, and we must apply for assistance to their proper dictionaries, or to somewhat substituted in their place. Instead of having recourse to a dictionary, which is the most laborious method, a Latin author we may interpret by means of an approved translation ; a prophetic writer we may decypher through the medium of a correct commentary.

From these observations it will appear indispensable, that, in a work like the present, if conducted upon sure grounds and in the fairest manner, appeal should frequently be made to the established import of the prophetic symbols, as explained by those writers, who are most judicious, and have been most conversant with the subject. But this is a task, toilsome to the writer, and, when

performed, uninviting to the reader ; and therefore, however necessary, it has *very rarely* been encountered.

‘ It appears,’ says bishop Hallifax, ‘ from the most superficial view of the Apocalypse, that it is made up of Two component parts<sup>29</sup>.’ These parts essentially differ in point of size, of subject, and of importance. The one is comprised within the three first chapters, and consists of epistles to seven of the most eminent of the Asiatic churches ; the other, occupying the nineteen remaining chapters, foretells the fortunes of Christianity, and the most memorable events and revolutions which were to happen in the world.

On the three first chapters, which are merely introductory to the main body of the Apocalypse, it is not necessary that the attention of the reader should be long fixed. ‘ As the apostles,’ says Dr. Johnston of Holywood, ‘ addressed their epistles to some particular church or person, so John addresses this book to the seven churches which were then in Asia Minor.—As John was in a state of banishment, this book might have been soon destroyed by his persecutors, had it remained in his own custody ; and, at any rate, it would not have been of use to the servants of God, if it had not been communicated to them. It was therefore proper that he should address it to some Christian church or churches ; and to none was it more natural for him to have done so than to those in Asia Minor, for he had resided for a considerable time at Ephesus, and superintended the church there, which was one of them, and all the seven were at a small distance from the island of Patmos, where he wrote this book.’ Thus also a ‘ wise precaution was taken to preserve it in existence and purity to succeeding ages. Lodged in several different churches, it was not very probable, that all the copies of it should be destroyed, or that so many churches should conspire to corrupt it by interpolations of their own<sup>30</sup>.’ That the epistles to the seven churches of Asia are not prophetic, as some have sup-

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29 P. 233.

30 Vol. I. p. 10, 58.



posed, 'it would,' says bishop Halifax, 'be easy to shew from the most convincing arguments<sup>31</sup>'; an assertion to which I subscribe without hesitation.

'The first thing required in expounding the Apocalypse,' says the prelate whom I have just named, 'was to settle with exactness the order and connection of the constituent parts; and that not by the help of an arbitrary hypothesis, taken up at pleasure, but from principles, existing in the work itself: the next step was to distribute the several visions, agreeably to this arrangement, into different sets, distinguished by the name of synchronisms.' Now this has been done by Mr. Mede, as the bishop and all competent judges are ready to admit, with the most meritorious industry and the most happy success, though at the same time it must be acknowledged, that this great man, with all his care and slowness of deliberation, has fallen into some errors. 'The very nature of these synchronisms,' I now resume the quotation from bishop Hallifax, 'requires, that in looking out for facts to answer them, our search be restrained to particular periods of time, beyond and out of which we are not at liberty to recede<sup>32</sup>.' To the same purpose bishop Hurd. 'The knowlege of this order is a great restraint on the fancy of an expositor: who is not now at liberty to apply the prophecies to events of any time, to which they appear to suit, but to events only falling within that time, to which they belong in the course of this pre-determined method. And if to this restriction, which of itself is considerable, we add another, which arises from the necessity of applying, not one, but many prophecies (which are thus shewn to synchronise with each other) to the same time, we can hardly conceive how an interpretation should keep clear of these impediments, and make its way through so many interfering checks, unless it be the true one<sup>33</sup>.'

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31 P. 233.

32 P. 324

33 Vol. II. p. 130.

If it be asked, whence is there more darkness in the book of Revelation than in the Jewish prophets, I answer that, in a great degree, it results from the continuity of the symbolic form; and if I am farther questioned for the ultimate reason, I reply that this difference was obviously proper. The ancient Hebrew prophecies, being proposed to a people undistinguished by their literary acquirements, and no long time before their accomplishment, were little likely to have their meaning prematurely penetrated; but the predictions of the Apocalypse, had they not been of a darker texture and of a more intricate method, would have been decyphered at a period much too early; since they were to be transmitted to the examination of many successive centuries, and not a few of them were to remain unfulfilled, till long after the invention of printing, and the introduction of genuine criticism, should have greatly facilitated their interpretation.

That the papal power is threatened with destruction in the Apocalypse is, however, stated with such clearness, as to admit of no ambiguity. This is a point upon which the Protestant commentators are sufficiently explicit and sufficiently copious. But on the various unaccomplished predictions of St. John against many of *the kings of the earth*, they are brief, cautious, and reserved. Conscious that in various places of his comprehensive prophecy great political events are foretold<sup>34</sup>, long have they been accustomed to touch all these parts with a very tender hand<sup>35</sup>; and the consequences, which necessarily flow from their true import, *some* among them have been ready in a great degree to disclaim, either from a desire of displaying their ingenuity in the spiritualising of texts, or from a fear of

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<sup>34</sup> Dr. Tho. Goodwin (p. 22.) conceiving that the Apocalypse consists of two great divisions, says 'it is certain, that the subject of both prophecies are the fates and destinies of the kingdoms of the world.' In ch. X. the angel of the vision says to St. John, *thou must prophecy before many nations and kings*, 'that is,' says Dr. Goodwin, 'about kings.'

<sup>35</sup> Such has been the conduct of commentators in general. That some of them have spoken with tolerable plainness, my quotations will shew.

incurring the formidable charge of political heresy. Dr. Henry More, a learned divine of the church of England, aware that the prophetic books of Daniel and of John are in a considerable degree of a political and revolutionary nature<sup>36</sup>, in discussing this point, has shrunk from the fair investigation of the question, and was afraid to treat it on its only proper grounds. Willing to evade it, he attached to it ideas which no man can seriously be supposed to hold: he supposes it to be maintained, that the *sole* tendency of these sacred books is to excite the overthrow of the established governments; and, having framed this perverse statement of the argument, he denies, without any hazard of contradiction, that the study of the Jewish, and of the Christian, prophet, primarily tends to the production of such consequences. ‘Some,’ says he (in the preface to his *Synopsis Prophetica*) ‘have a conceit, that the searching into prophecies, especially those of the Apocalypse and of Daniel, tends to nothing else but faction and confusion, to the trouble and dissettlement of the affairs of Christendom, and to the hazard of the subversion of states and kingdoms.’ ‘But,’ adds the doctor, ‘it is very rashly and unskilfully spoken,’ to assert ‘that the search into these prophecies of Daniel and the Apocalypse tends to nothing but tumult and sedition.’ To him, on the contrary, the prophetic visions of St. John appear ‘friendly to the prerogative of secular princes<sup>37</sup>,’ and he repeatedly exults in having so explained them, that they shall no longer seem to yield encouragement to ‘persons to tumultuate against their lawful sovereigns.’

36 Grotius, appearing to be fully apprised of this, in his enumeration of the unjust causes of national hostility, has written one section purposely to prove, that the fulfilling of scriptural prophecies is no sufficient reason for entering into a war. Book II. ch. 22. sect. 15. of his learned work on the *Rights of War and Peace*.

37 Notwithstanding all that the doctor has professed in his preface, I apprehend, that he has been forced, in the course of his own commentaries, to embrace some interpretations, altogether hostile to *secular princes*:

But if the Apocalypse does contain predictions hostile to tyrants; if it does afford encouragement to those, who now combat, or shall hereafter combat, under the banner of freedom; I am furnished with no sufficient reason, why these predictions should remain unexplained, or why this encouragement should be cautiously withheld.

In the preface to his *Paralipomena Prophetica*, Dr. More renews his complaint; and observes, that some interpreters of Daniel and the Apocalypse had joined ‘with the ruin of Antichrist, the abolishing of monarchy,’ supposing, I apprehend, that they would sustain a contemporary destruction. To the comments made on chapters II. and VII. of Daniel he probably in particular alludes. Now since most, if not all the commentators, infer from these chapters, that the European monarchies will at length be destroyed, probably some of the writers, pointed at by Dr. More, might, because it is evident from the prophetic scriptures that the world will continue to exist long after this time, and because mankind must still continue to live under some form of government, therefore with confidence conclude, that the voice of prophecy plainly intimates, that, in the place of monarchies, republics shall every where be established. If the opponents of this learned expositor maintained such a conclusion, we shall cease to wonder at the warmth which he sometimes discovers, when touching on this subject.

To comment on the Apocalypse, so as to please the ruling powers, has long been a task of no small difficulty. In the time of Dr. More, to represent even the Roman pontiff as Antichrist was an unpopular doctrine. Mr. Mede ‘had exerted,’ says bishop Newton, ‘more learning and sagacity in explaining the prophecies, and in fixing the true idea of Antichrist, than perhaps any writer in any age. But perhaps for this very reason he was looked upon with an evil eye, and (to the disgrace of the times) obtained no preferment.’ Indeed ‘it was esteemed a mark



of a puritan, and was a certain obstacle to preferment, for any man to preach that the pope was Antichrist<sup>38</sup>.'

That the despotism of princes, as well as of priests, is represented by Daniel and by John, in various parts of their respective prophecies, will, I believe, be satisfactorily evinced in the following chapters. But though the exercise of *civil* tyranny is foretold, and with clearness, it was not necessary for the prophet to be so minute as in his predictions of ecclesiastical cruelty and usurpation. The former had been practised in almost every region of the world ; and there needed no supernatural foresight to point out, that it would in future prevail. But the universal prevalence of ecclesiastical tyranny was an event altogether unprecedented and improbable. Such a prediction, if verified, must be confessed to bear on it the marks of having been divinely communicated. In the first century, when the world was heathen, and the religion of Jesus produced its proper effects, what penetration, merely human, could have discovered, that the time would come, when *the kings of the earth* would *give their power and strength*<sup>39</sup> to a proud and profligate priesthood, professing Christianity ; and that under the pretext of serving a religion, thus mild and pacific, mankind would be slaughtered, and enslaved, and plunged in crimes ?

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## CHAPTER V.

### ON THE TEN-HORNED BEAST.

SO often are the two-horned and the ten-horned Beasts mentioned in the Apocalypse, and so much depends on the forming of correct ideas respecting them ; that, before I proceed to the examination of any other part of that

sacred book, it will be proper to give some account of these emblematic personages. The description of them is principally contained in the xiii<sup>th</sup> chapter. That *Horns* denote not single *kings* but *kingdoms* is now agreed by all the commentators; and it is universally admitted by them, however unwillingly it may often be admitted, that *the Ten Kingdoms*, mentioned by Daniel and by John, are the modern dynasties of the European world which now subsist.

By Daniel *Four Beasts*, or oppressive empires, are described. The last of them, having Ten Horns, belongs to the Roman empire, as governed first by the emperors, and afterwards by the Ten Kings, among whom the western empire was partitioned: and it is this emblematic *Beast*, in its last state, as existing in the time of these monarchies, which St. John represents in his visions. It is ‘for the convenience of the prophetic calculations,’ that the Roman western empire ‘is considered as subsisting, though in a new form, under the Ten Kings, among whom it was to be divided.’ The identity of these two Beasts, that of Daniel and that of John, Romanists and Protestants alike admit. ‘*The Beast* that arose out of the sea (Rev. ch. xiii.),’ says that learned Jesuit Alcasar, ‘evidently relates to *the fourth Beast* in Daniel, ch. vii.’ That ‘the whole description of it is borrowed from the vii<sup>th</sup> chapter of the prophecy of Daniel,’ is the declaration of Joseph Mede. ‘It is,’ says Dr. Cressener, ‘unquestionable, that the Fourth Beast in Daniel is the same with the beast in the Revelations, and especially in the time of the little Horn.’

‘We are to look,’ says Sir Isaac Newton<sup>5</sup>, ‘for all the eleven horns of the fourth beast, among the nations on this side Greece.’ With respect to ‘the Greek empire seated at Constantinople,’ we are not to reckon it, adds this great author, ‘among the Horns of the fourth Beast, because it belonged to the body of the third.’ ‘These Ten Horns,’

1 Hurd, vol. II. p. 191.

2 In Apoc. sect. 3. cap. 13.

3 P. 623.

4 Dem. of the Prot. Appl. of the Apoc. p. 86.

5 P. 31.

says bishop Hallifax, ‘are the Ten Kingdoms of the Latin or western empire<sup>6</sup>.’ ‘We must look,’ says bishop Newton, ‘for the Ten Kings or Kingdoms, where only they can be found, amid the broken pieces of the Roman empire. The Roman empire, as the Romanists themselves allow, was, by means of the incursions of the northern nations, dismembered into Ten Kingdoms<sup>7</sup>.’ ‘Procopius,’ says Dr. Worthington, ‘who was half Heathen and half Christian, and who therefore could have but little regard for scripture-prophecies,—reckons up these several nations; and they prove to be in number exactly Ten, according to his recital<sup>8</sup>.’ ‘As if that number of Ten,’ says Daubuz, ‘had been fatal in the Roman dominions, it hath been taken notice of upon particular occasions. As about A. 1240 by Eberhard, bishop of Saltsburg in the diet at Ratisbon.—At the time of the reformation—they were also Ten<sup>9</sup>.’ ‘As the number of the kingdoms,’ says Mr. Whiston, ‘into which the Roman empire in Europe, agreeably to the ancient prophecies, was originally divided, A. D. 456, was exactly Ten:—so is it also very nearly returned again to the same condition; and at present is divided into Ten grand or principal kingdoms or states<sup>10</sup>.’

However, ‘we need not,’ as Daubuz observes, ‘to heed much the after-divisions.—The Holy Ghost only takes notice of that number in the *origin* of the Beast.’ ‘We must know,’ says Jurieu (speaking of the Ten Horns) ‘that things retain the names which they bore in their original, without regarding the alterations which time does bring along<sup>11</sup>.’ To the same purpose Sir I. Newton. After enumerating the Ten Kingdoms into which the western empire was divided, he observes, ‘some of these kingdoms at length fell, and new ones arose: but whatever was their number afterwards, they are still called the Ten Kings from their first number<sup>12</sup>.’

6 P. 83.

7 Vol. I. p. 460.

8 Serm. at Boyles's Lect. 1769. vol. II. p. 79.

9 P. 556.

10 P. 234.

11 Vol. II. p. 266.

12 P. 73.

To ch. xiii. of the Apocalypse the most attentive consideration is due. Whilst the Beast with Ten Horns, the representative of the Ten Kings, and the emblem of *Civil Tyranny*, is pourtrayed in the first ten verses of the chapter; the seven that follow contain an account of another emblematic *Beast, having two horns like a lamb, and speaking as a dragon*, who is an ecclesiastical personage, and denotes the Antichristian Priesthood and *Ecclesiastical Tyranny*. That the ten-horned Beast is a personage altogether distinct from the antichristian priesthood, is abundantly evident from a perusal of the xiiiith chapter; nor is this less clearly to be deduced from an inspection of the prophetic scenery of the xviith; where the antichristian priesthood are emblematised by a woman sumptuously attired, and this woman is represented as being *seated upon the ten-horned Beast*.

The account given by St. John of the first Beast is as follows. And I saw a *Beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. And the Beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority. And I saw one of his heads, as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the Beast. And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the Beast: and they worshipped the Beast, saying, who is like unto the beast? Who is able to make war with him? And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the*



*book of life of the lamb slain from the foundation of the world*<sup>13</sup>.

This *Beast*, says Daubuz, is the representative of the ‘Ten Monarchies,’ which arose ‘out of the ruins of the Roman empire<sup>14</sup>.’ ‘He represents,’ says Mr. Pyle, ‘the *Civil Powers* of the Roman empire,’ meaning that empire in its present state, as divided into a number of independent governments. In contradistinction to the other, it is denominated by bishop Newton ‘the *Secular Beast* ;’ and his lordship correctly says, that whilst the other *Beast* ‘enslaves the consciences,’ this ‘subjugates the bodies of men.’ ‘St. John,’ says the prelate ‘saw this *Beast rising* out of the sea, but the Roman empire was *risen* and established long before St. John’s time, and therefore this must be the Roman empire, not in its then present, but in some future shape and form ; and it arose in another shape and form, after it was broken to pieces by the incursions of the northern nations.—And the sovereignty, which before was exercised by Rome alone, was now transferred and divided among Ten Kingdoms<sup>15</sup>.’ In correspondence with this, Mr. Pyle says, ‘you have the same *Beast* in a new shape.—It is no longer a pagan empire ; but it is the same dominion under Ten weak Tyrants<sup>16</sup>.’ ‘Those Ten Kingdoms of the Roman empire,’ says Mr. Whiston<sup>17</sup>, ‘which arose in the fifth century, are that great *Beast* with seven heads<sup>18</sup> and ten horns.’ But important as the subject is, I

13 The last clause Mr. Wakefield renders somewhat differently. *Whose names are not written from the foundation of the world, in the book of life of the lamb that was slaughtered.*

14 See p. 618.

15 Vol. III. p. 207.

16 P. 101.

17 P. 115. ‘This empire under its Ten Kings,’ Mr. Whiston elsewhere says, ‘became very large, and proud, and blasphemous, and idolatrous.’ P. 218.

18 The mention of *the seven heads* serves an important purpose. First, it ascertains with precision in *what part of the world* the Ten Monarchies, signified by the Ten Horns, were to be erected. For it denotes, that they were to be reared in the countries at that time belonging to the Roman emperors, since, as bishop Newton remarks, *the seven heads* ‘are the well-

am introducing authorities with a needless profusion ; since the prophet himself has communicated to us direct information on the point, not only telling us, that this emblematic *Beast had Ten Horns, and upon his Horns<sup>19</sup> Ten Crowns*, but that *the Ten Horns are Ten Kings<sup>20</sup>*. It deserves also to be noted, that *the dragon* is expressly said to have *given* to the ten-horned Beast *his power*. Now ‘a dragon,’ as bishop Hurd observes, when speaking of this passage, ‘is the known symbol of the old Roman government in its pagan, persecuting state<sup>21</sup>.’ And *who* succeeded the Roman emperors in their power, but the Ten Kings, among whom the provinces of the empire was distributed ?

The symbolic import of *sea<sup>22</sup>*, from which the ten-horned Beast is said to have *risen*, perfectly harmonises with these observations. ‘*The sea*,’ says Daubuz, ‘signifies a multitude of men in commotion or war<sup>23</sup>. Therefore in Daniel’s visions we find *the four winds striving upon the great sea*, and out of it *four great beasts* arising<sup>24</sup>, to signify that four great monarchies should arise out of the wars, which should happen in the world ; one of which

known marks and signals of the Roman empire,’ and allude not only to the seven mountains, but also ‘to the seven forms of government which successively prevailed there.’ Vol. III. p. 207. Secondly, it also in some degree marks out *the period* of the Ten Horns ; for it may be inferred, and in particular from v. 10 and 12 of c. xvii. that they should not appear till after the sixth head had fallen ; that is, that the Ten Horns should not arise till after the imperial government was dissolved.

19 ‘These horns have Ten Crowns upon them : i. e. they denote so many kings or crowned heads, over so many distinct provinces or kingdoms.’ Whiston, p. 217.

20 Rev. xvii. 12.

21 Vol. II. p. 161.

22 In ch. xvii. a kindred symbol occurs. The Babylonish woman having appeared to St. John (v. 1), *sitting upon many waters* ; the angelic interpreter said unto him (v. 15), *the waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues*.

23 ‘The resemblance between the noise of an enraged sea and the noise of an army or multitude in commotion is obvious, and frequently taken notice of by the prophets.’ Dr. Lancaster’s Dict.

24 VII. 2, 3.

bears the characters of this beast.' In the same manner, in the passage under consideration (I am now transcribing from Dr. Lancaster's abridgement of Daubuz) '*the ascending of the wild Beast, here described, from the sea* denotes, that the tyrannical power represented has its origin from wars and commotions. And forasmuch as this wild Beast *has seven heads and ten horns*, as well as *the dragon*; hereby is denoted that he is possessed of the same empire as *the dragon* was; and consequently that the wars and commotions, from whence this beast had his rise, were such as had happened in the Roman empire, by the irruptions of the barbarous nations.'

The Secular Beast is likened to *the bear, the leopard, and the lion*. These, says Mr. Lowman, are 'famous for strength and rapaciousness in seizing and devouring their prey.' They are therefore admirably expressive of the formidable power and the plundering policy of the anti-christian monarchies of Europe. It is, remarks an early commentator, 'said to be like a leopard, full of spots, swift and cruel; to have the feet of a bear, which grasps both with the hindmost and foremost legs and claws; and to have the mouth of a lion, to tear and devour. The government which this nature doth affect is absolute, to have all in subjection in its will without any other rule or law<sup>25</sup>.' The epithet of *scarlet-colored*<sup>26</sup> is fastened upon this Beast, observe bishop Newton and Mr. Pyle, 'to denote his cruelty<sup>27</sup>.'

*And the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority.* The word here translated *seat*, should rather have been translated *throne*, as it is by Wakefield, Doddridge, and Daubuz. 'This,' says Daubuz, 'is an induction of particulars to shew, that the dragon surren-

<sup>25</sup> *Clavis Apocalyptica*, 1651, p. 48 of the Pref.

<sup>26</sup> Rev. xvii. 3.

<sup>27</sup> 'That *red* doth emblematisè bloody cruelty and barbarous persecution is so obvious to conceive, that it seems needless to have noted it' More's Prophetic Alphabet.

dered up to the Beast all its royalties, or the several parts of his power. *Δυναμις* is often taken for the armies<sup>28</sup>, *the throne* is the imperial seat, or power of government, and his *authority* is the jurisdiction over all the subjects. The terms are easily understood; and that this signifies, that the Beast succeeded in the same power as the dragon; that is, that the Roman empire was divided into the Ten Monarchies of the Beast.—There is one thing more to be observed, that the dragon is said to give his power to the Beast; whereas it appears, that the barbarians, who dismembered the empire, did enter it by force: but this is not material, for a surrender of power is the giving up of that power. But besides that, the Romans did not barely surrender their power, but gave it for the most part by treaty to those barbarians under the name of alliance.’

To facilitate our inquiries into the import of the next verse (v. 3), it will be requisite previously to explain a passage in ch. xvii. After mentioning *the seven heads*<sup>29</sup> in v. 9, the angelic interpreter says in v. 10, *And they*<sup>30</sup> *are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space.* The subsequent explanation is from bishop Newton. ‘*And they are seven kings, or kingdoms, or forms*

28 Mede (in loc. p. 621) alleges passages in proof of this. *Εξουσια*, says Dr. More, which is here translated *authority*, ‘shews that *δυναμις* signifies military forces, or else it were a needless tautology.’ *Ans. to Rem.* p. 89.

29 ‘In all the figures of beasts in the prophecy of Daniel,’ says the learned Dr. Cressener, are signified ‘by the *horns and heads of a beast* the several kinds of supreme government in’ the nation spoken of. ‘If they be described to come *after one another*, they signify so many successive kinds of settled government over the same kingdom. But if they be described to be *in rule all at the same time*, they signify so many distinct sovereignties, or kingdoms.’ Now it is admitted by all, says Dr. Cressener, that St. John has borrowed all these symbols from the book of Daniel. *Dem. of the Prot. Appl. of the Apoc.* p. 93.

30 In the common version it is, *and there are seven kings.* But bishop Newton, Wakefield, Doddridge, Lowman, Pyle, and Daubuz, are unanimous in introducing *they* into the translation.



of government, as the word imports, and hath been shewn to import in former instances. *Five are fallen*, five of these forms of government are already passed; *and one is*, the sixth is now subsisting. The *five fallen* are kings, and consuls, and dictators, and decemvirs, and military tribunes with consular authority; as they are enumerated and distinguished by those who should best know, the two greatest Roman historians, Livy and Tacitus. The *sixth* is the power of the Cæsars or emperors, which was subsisting at the time of the vision.' With respect to the seventh head, which in St. John's time was *not yet come*, and was to *continue a short space*, I shall quote from Mr. Evanson; previously observing, that the prophet says in v. 11, ch. xvii, that *the Beast itself is the eighth*, i. e. may be regarded as an eighth head. 'There cannot remain a doubt,' that *the Beast having seven heads and ten horns* 'is a prophetic type of the civil power of the Roman empire, considered in this prophecy of the New Testament, first, as subsisting under its sixth or imperial form of government; then, as being for a short space of time only semi-imperial; and lastly, as consisting of that pollarchy, into which the semi-empire was broken by the incursions of the northern nations<sup>31</sup>.'

I shall now return to ch. xiii. *And I saw one of his heads, as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world<sup>32</sup> wondered after<sup>33</sup> the Beast.* This head, according to the quotation recently alleged, was the semi-imperial government, which was *wounded* even unto *death* by the hostile invasions of the barbarians from the east and from the north. By Mr. Pyle, who, the

31 Let. to bishop Hurd, p. 39.

32 'The word rendered *world*,' says Johnston of Holywood (in loc.), 'ought to have been translated earth. It is  $\gamma\eta$  in the original, the proper signification of which is earth, and which is uniformly in this book translated earth.' *The earth*, in his opinion, is to be regarded as the symbol of the Roman empire.

33 ' $\Thetaαυμαζω$  is here taken as in Jude, 16:— $\Thetaαυμαζω$  is to make courtship to, fawn, flatter, and submit to.' Daubuz.

reader will perceive, does not distinguish between the imperial and semi-imperial power, this verse is thus paraphrased. ‘One of these forms of government, or one *head* of this empire, received, methought, a fatal blow, i. e. the imperial power, under the Cæsars, was destroyed by the barbarous nations. But, though this one head was destroyed, *the Beast* itself still lived; the power, the persecuting power, still remained, though got into several hands, and the Ten Kings exercised the same cruel and arbitrary dominion over their Christian subjects as ever the heathen emperors had done. Thus *the deadly wound was healed*, to the pleasing astonishment of all the corrupted part of the Christian world.’ The similar statement that follows is from an ingenious writer of the last century. ‘The deadly wound of one of the heads of the Beast’ signifies ‘the ruin of the empire by the incursion of the barbarous nations, and the extinguishing of the western emperors in Augustulus.—He lived again, when the like politic body or civil state of affairs in the empire was re-established by the ten-horned Beast, by the barbarous nations settling into a subjection to, or a compliance with, the Roman laws<sup>34</sup>.’

*And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the Beast; and they worshipped the Beast, saying, Who is like unto the Beast<sup>35</sup>? Who is able to make war with him?* Dazzled with the lustre of the imperial throne, mankind in general had formerly revered the power and the persons of the Cæsars; and had supported them in their exactions, and their despotism. Thus also has it happened to the ten-horned Beast, who has since laid waste the ancient dominions of the dragon. The mass of mankind, since the establishment of the tyrannic governments of

34 This anonymous writer, whose signature is S. E. is quoted by Dr. More in his *Ans. to Remarks*, p. 90, 98.

35 ‘This says Daubuz, ‘may be limited to civil submission and adoration, as the word signifies sometimes.’ In proof of this, he refers to many passages.

modern Europe, have manifested an irrational reverence for the glitter which surrounds the thrones of their despots, and the titles with which they have been decorated; though their own labors have been taxed for the support of that glitter, and the assumption of those titles has often been inconsistent with their most valuable rights. They have been ready to exclaim, *Who is like unto the Beast, who is able to make war with him*<sup>36</sup>? When any nation has struggled to break its chains asunder, how often has the noble effort been regarded as altogether vain; even criminality has been attached to it; and it has been branded with the epithets of disloyalty and rebellion!

It is the declaration of the prophet, that, on all the heads of this *Beast*, names of blasphemy were imprinted. That is, says Mr. Whiston, all the ‘forms of government, under which the empire had been, and was to be, were idolatrous.’ And *the Ten Kings*, he observes, under the Christian name, should yet really and effectually promote idolatry still, though in a more covert manner, and by more cunning pretences<sup>37</sup>.’ Of the Secular Beast it is farther said, that *he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name and his tabernacle*. Now, says Mr. Evan-son, ‘to speak blasphemously, as far as I am able to understand that expression, can only signify, to speak dishonorably of God; to speak in derogation of his divine nature and attributes.’ To form a just judgment then of this part of the prophetic vision, it is necessary to examine, ‘whether the civil governors of Europe—have propagated and established doctrines fairly liable to such a charge<sup>38</sup>.’ But

36 Examples of this, says Peganius (p. 179,) ‘are found in the victorious kings of Spain and France.’ With respect also to that symbolic beast with many horns, or the combination of kings, now warring against France as it labors to establish its infant liberties, how often have expressions to this purport fallen from the lips of their admirers!

37 P. 217. ‘These names of blasphemy signify, that the monarchs and powers shall blaspheme God, and oblige their subjects to do the same.’ Daubuz.

38 Let. to bishop Hurd, p. 45. ‘*Blasphemy*,’ says Daubuz, p. 571, ‘is whatsoever tends to the dishonor of God;’ and ‘to impose a new worship,’

what is *to blaspheme the name and the tabernacle of God*? Bishop Newton says on this verse, that ‘he is convicted of the first of these charges, who assumes to himself the divine titles and honors; and he *blasphemes the tabernacle of God*, that is to say, his temple and his church, who calls true Christians, who are the house of God, schismatics and heretics, and anathematises them accordingly<sup>39</sup>.’ Whether the lofty titles<sup>40</sup> and persecuting conduct of many among the European potentates can, on this ground, be impeached, I refer to him, who is conversant in the language of courts and the history of kingdoms.

Though it is the two-horned Beast, who has principally forged fetters for the conscience, though priests and pontiffs are the persons who have enforced this antichristian claim with the most unremitting industry; the princes likewise, who constitute the ten-horned beast, have almost universally arrogated the power of stigmatizing and punishing men for their religious sentiments, when these have happened not to harmonise with the creed of the court<sup>41</sup>. The prophet accordingly declares, that *it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them*:

he observes in the following page, ‘*or manner of worship*, contrary to what he hath set already, is to usurp his power, and consequently to belie and blaspheme his name.’

39 Vol. III. p. 215.

40 ‘Even the hallowed epithets and ceremonies of religious adoration have,’ says an ingenious writer, ‘been impiously pressed into the service of indiscriminate flattery, and the kings and nobles of the earth have [not scrupled to encroach upon the majesty of heaven!’ Often, as he observes, is indignation kindled in the mind, when history ‘unfolds the genuine characters of these most sacred, most christian, most noble, most puissant, high and mighty sovereigns and rulers of the globe.’ Cooper’s Answer to Mr. Burke’s Invective.

41 The celebrated Calvin, speaking of the ecclesiastical power lodged in the hands of Henry VIII. and his successors by the British constitution, says, ‘*Hoc me semper graviter vulneravit. Erant enim blasphemi quum vocarent ipsum summum caput ecclesiæ sub Christo.—Hic morbus semper in principibus regnavit, ut vellent inflectere religionem pro suo arbitrio ac libidine, et interca etiam pro suis commodis.*’ In Amos, c. vii.



words which are thus paraphrased by a member of the English hierarchy<sup>42</sup>. ‘The worst and most dreadful article of this antichristian dominion will be, that of forcing the consciences of men in religious matters, and of persecuting all that dare to question or withstand their idolatrous commands.’ In the Netherlands alone, on account of religion, ‘more than 100,000 of the subjects of Charles V. are said to have suffered by the hand of *the executioner*; and this extraordinary number is attested by Grotius, a man of genius and learning, who preserved his moderation amidst the fury of contending sects, and who composed the annals of his own age and country, at a time when the invention of printing had facilitated the means of intelligence, and increased the danger of detection<sup>43</sup>.’ Father Paul, however, it is proper to state, reduces these Belgic martyrs to 50,000. The Jesuit Sanders himself confesses, that an innumerable multitude of Lollards and Sacramentarians were burnt throughout all Europe, who yet, he says, were not put to death by the pope and bishops, but by the civil magistrates; which perfectly agrees with this prophecy, for it is said of *the Secular Beast*, that HE should *make war with the saints, and overcome them*<sup>44</sup>.

But perhaps these words of the prophet are not to be understood exclusively of religious persecutions. They may be of more general interpretation. They may refer to those multiplied oppressions and cruel sufferings, political as well as religious, to which genuine Christians, and men of honest and upright minds, have been peculiarly exposed during the profligate administration of antichristian monarchs.

‘The kings of the earth,’ says the pious Dr. Owen, ‘have given their power to Antichrist, endeavoring to the utmost to keep the kingdom of Christ out of the world. What, I

42 Mr. Pyle, prebendary of Salisbury.

43 Gibbon’s Decl. and Fall of the R. E. vol. II. p. 495. See Grot. *Annal. de Rebus Belgicis*. l. I. p. 12. Amstel. 1667.

44 Bishop Newton in loc.

pray, hath been their main business for seven hundred years and upwards, even almost ever since the man of sin was enthroned? How have they earned the titles, *eldest son of the church, the catholic and most Christian king, defender of the faith*, and the like? Hath it not been by the blood of the saints<sup>45</sup>?

*And power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.* This also has been wonderfully verified. And some possibly may be disposed to ask, has not the domination of the European monarchies, in conformity to this prediction, been established in every quarter of the globe; and have not they, or the plunderers whom they patronise and protect, extended their devastations and power to the extensive shores of Africa and the southern continent of America, to the populous plains of Hindostan and the defenceless islands of the Ocean?

*And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him<sup>46</sup>, whose names are not written in the book of life<sup>47</sup>.* Mr. Whiston, when speaking of this passage and of the Ten Kings, says, ‘some few chosen persons only, *whose names were written in the book of life*, durst oppose them, or refuse submission to their wicked and idolatrous commands<sup>48</sup>.’ Certain indeed it is, that the inhabitants of Europe have paid a servile homage to the tyrants who have oppressed them; whilst those virtuous persons, the favorites of heaven, have been few in number, who have sacrificed their interest, and hazarded their safety, by asserting the inviolability of conscience, or by standing forward in defence of the civil liberties of mankind. Such persons will not, however, lose their reward.

<sup>45</sup> *Complete Col.* of his Serm. p. 328.

<sup>46</sup> This phrase Dr. More thus explains: ‘*Shall worship him*, that is, obey his idolatrous edicts and commands.’

<sup>47</sup> It imports, says Durham (p. 186), ‘that they are as definitely and distinctly determined and known,—as if they were by name and surname particularly recorded in a book.’

<sup>48</sup> P. 218.

## CHAPTER VI.

## ON THE TWO-HORNED BEAST.

THE following is St. John's description of the Second Beast. *And I beheld another Beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. And he exerciseth all the power of the first Beast before him, and causeth the earth and them that dwell therein, to worship the first Beast, whose deadly wound was healed. And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men. And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth, by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the Beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the Beast, which had a wound by a sword and did live. And he had power to give life unto the image of the Beast, that the image of the Beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the Beast should be killed. And he caused all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the Beast, or the number of his name<sup>1</sup>.*

The distinction between the Beasts, the one as CIVIL, the other as ECCLESIASTICAL, is so obvious as to have been early pointed out. Joseph Mede<sup>2</sup>, whose death took place in the year 1638, and Cradock, whose commentary was published near the close of the last century, both embrace this distinction without hesitation; and Mr. Durham, whose Exposition appeared in 1660, notices it, as adopted by different learned interpreters. 'The

<sup>1</sup> XIII. 11—17.

<sup>2</sup> P. 619. It was in the 52d year of his age, and at Christ's College, Cambridge, where he had spent the greatest part of his life, that this excellent man died.

former Beast,' says Dr. Wall, 'represents the Secular Power of the Roman empire (as it was now in the Ten Horns), and *this* the Pontifical<sup>3</sup>.' 'The Second Beast,' says Dr. Cressener, 'is a succession of ecclesiastical persons having the supreme power in ecclesiastical affairs<sup>4</sup>.' The two-horned Beast may represent, says Waple, 'the antichristian power of the clergy.' 'This beast,' says Daubuz, 'represents a succession of heads, having under them the whole body of the corrupted clergy.' Like Waple and Daubuz, Dr. More warns his readers, that it is not exclusively to be understood of the church and clergy of Rome. This emblematic personage, says Mr. Evanson, 'is afterwards called *the false prophet*<sup>5</sup>, that is, a Teacher of a false religion; it plainly denotes therefore the ecclesiastical ministry of the antichristian superstition<sup>6</sup>.' 'All,' says Vitranga, 'discern, that by this Beast is signified a certain body of false teachers; since this is abundantly clear from the attributes of this Beast, which attributes we shall presently consider, as well from a following part of the prophecy, wherein this Beast is denominated *the false teacher*.'

To interpret the two-horned Beast exclusively of the church of Rome is, I apprehend, altogether an error. Those, however, who attribute to it the greatest extent of import, will generally be perfectly ready to admit, that Rome has been the head-quarters of sacerdotal usurpation; and that its practices and policy have been imitated by other churches, though upon a contracted scale.

Widely did the two Beasts differ in their mode of rising. Whilst *the Beast, having Ten Horns*, was seen *rising up out of the sea*, i. e. to use the words of Mr. Pyle, 'out of the people and nations of the world, that were in great agitation like a stormy ocean;' the two-horned *Beast* appeared to the apostle *coming up out of the earth*, i. e. from

3 Critical Notes on the New Test. in loc.

4 Dem. of the Pr. Appl. of the Apoc. p. 179.

5 Ο Ψευδοπροφητης, which Mr. Wakefield translates *the false teacher*.

6 Let. to Hurd, p. 52.



among the antichristian part of mankind, from among men, devoid of the love of truth, ready to follow the multitude in every folly, and principally intent on gratifying the passions of ambition or of interest. If we appeal to fact, we shall assuredly find, that it is to men of this character, that clerical usurpation owes its early growth, its maturer strength, and the fondness with which it is still cherished in its declining years. Was it not by them, that false doctrines were first arbitrarily imposed upon the mind, that superstitious practices were introduced into the church, and the engines of persecution set in motion? That this is an established symbolic sense of the word *earth* will be shewn in a future page. But it is not the only sense. Sometimes it is the symbol of the great body of the people. Possibly it may be so here, and in its import may be opposed to the word *sea*. The former is an emblem of a tranquil character; the latter denotes commotion and turbulence. The ecclesiastical Beast may then, as Mede<sup>7</sup> and Paganus explain the words, be said to *come 'out of the earth*, not by a violent conflux of a multitude of people, as the Temporal governments arise,—but silently, by degrees, and unheeded.'

This emblematic personage is said to have *two horns like a lamb*, i. e. says Daubuz, 'a pretended power like that of the *Lamb*.' When we reflect, says bp. Hurd, 'that *horns*, in the prophetic style, are the emblems of power, and that a *lamb* is the peculiar, the appropriated symbol of Christ,—and is constantly so employed throughout this whole prophecy of the Revelations, we must, of necessity, conclude, that a *beast with the horns of a lamb* can only be a state, or person, pretending to such powers as Christ exercised, and his religion authoriseth; that is, powers, not of this world, but purely spiritual<sup>8</sup>.' The antichristian priesthood, whom the two-horned Beast represents, affect to teach the doctrines of Christ, to be animated with his spirit, and possessed of his authority. They accordingly assume the

high prerogatives of being *judges* over the conscience, and the decisive *interpreters* of the will of heaven. As if possessed of infallibility, they despotically appoint, what articles of faith are to be believed, and what modes of worship are to be practised. The *horns*, says Mr. Pyle, have been interpreted ‘of the several *powers* this *Beast* pretended to have a right to exercise.—But perhaps, after all, the *horns* might be here mentioned by St. John only as part of the description of the lamb; the appearance whereof this *Beast* now affected to take upon him.’ ‘When it is said, that the *Beast spake as a dragon*, the meaning is,’ says bp. Hurd, ‘that Antichrist should assume the highest tone of civil authority in promoting his tyrannous purposes, though he cloked his fierce pretensions under the meek resemblance of a spiritual character<sup>9</sup>.’

It is indeed said of him (v, 12), that *he exerciseth all the power of the first Beast*<sup>10</sup>; and closely does this correspond with fact. Princes and nobles, during almost the whole period of modern history, have either lodged an ample share of the power and property of the state in the hands of pontiffs and of priests; or guaranteeing their possession of it, have supported them in their daring usurpation over the rights of conscience. But in pursuing this line of conduct, wicked as it may be, their interest<sup>11</sup> they undeniably consult. Accordingly it immediately follows, that the two-horned *Beast*<sup>12</sup> *causeth the earth and them which dwell there-*

9 Vol. II. p. 161.

10 The two-horned *Beast* is also said to exercise the *power of the first Beast* BEFORE HIM; i. e. says Mr. Sam. Clark, ‘by the permission of the several princes, and in their dominions, and with their authority.’ In agreement with this, this respectable annotator observes (on Rev. xvi. 13), that *the Beast* signifies ‘the Antichristian Civil powers,’ and the *False Prophet*, ‘the Antichristian Ecclesiastical Powers.’

11 The line of interest and of policy they did, however, unwarily overstep, when, in a period of the dark ages, they raised the sacerdotal body to such a pitch of aggrandisement, as to render it formidable to themselves.

12 The ecclesiastical *Beast*, says Whiston (p. 244) ‘by joining with them, procures ‘them a blind obedience from their subjects.’

*in to worship the first Beast*<sup>13</sup>. This is the alliance between church and state, the benefits of which have been so loudly sounded. Of priests in all countries, too many have been ready to propagate the detestable doctrine of passive obedience and non-resistance, and to aid the crown in the depression of civil liberty<sup>14</sup>. To this reciprocity of assistance is to be ascribed the continuance of many of the grievances of mankind.

*And he doth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men*; that is, the antichristian priesthood are possessed of such power, as to cause persecution<sup>15</sup> to come down from those invested with the civil government upon their subjects; and this is done not privately and by stealth, but *in the sight of men*, i. e. publicly. To prove that *heaven* is a symbol signifying the civil government or governors, repeated authorities will hereafter be cited. That this prediction has been amply verified, the annals of Europe too clearly testify, when they give an imperfect narrative of the millions, whose slaughter has been instigated by the priesthood.

*And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth, by the means of those miracles*<sup>16</sup> *which he had power to do in the sight of the Beast*. Since it is plain, that the Deity would not permit the antichristian priesthood to work real miracles; the import of the words may be, that they would raise themselves into the favor of princes and of people, by those arts of deception which they would employ, and those fictitious miracles which they would perform. Now every

13 Daubuz, upon this verse, pertinently cites the following passage from cardinal Palavicini. 'The monarchies would not be durable for the insolencies of innovators without the interposition of the spiritual authority; and by that means the number of plots and rebellions is much less.'

14 'All disloyalty and disrespect,' shewn to princes, says the learned Bingham (in his *Antiquities of the Christian Church*), 'was always severely chastised by the laws of the church.' B. xvi. c. 9.

15 Not only is *fire* the symbol of destruction in general, but, as Daubuz observes on this verse, of persecution in particular.

16 The word translated *miracles* need not have been so translated. In the preceding verse it is rendered *wonders*.

man, conversant in ecclesiastical history, knows, that the period, when the sacerdotal body first arrived at great opulence and power, was fertile in false miracles, and that in a variety of ways they deceived the people, in order to swell that opulence, and to extend that power.

The prophet having informed us, that the two-horned Beast would be successful in the delusions which he would practise, and in his endeavors to arrive at great influence; next proceeds to state what would be the use, which he would make of that influence when acquired. *He says to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the Beast, which had the wound by a sword and did live.* That the suggestions of the antichristian priesthood would be listened to, and their wishes carried into execution, the prophet foretells in the following verse. *And he HAD power to give life unto the image of the Beast, that the image of the Beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the Beast should be killed.* What this *image of the Beast* is, an extract from Mr. Evanson will shew. ‘The apostate ecclesiastics, by their intrigues and influence, procured an *image* of the Civil Power to be set up, and were able to give it such an active energy, that it could utter decrees and ordinances, and caused those, who refused to worship, that is, to pay implicit obedience to it in all religious concerns, to be put to death.—Such an *image* of temporal power, contrary to every principle, not of Christianity only, but even of sound policy, did the Latin emperors erect, and all the succeeding princes of Europe uphold, when they established the Hierarchy and its courts of spiritual jurisdiction. The authority of ecclesiastics, with respect both to this world and the next, is altogether groundless and imaginary. Yet the Hierarchy once formed, with much artifice and by degrees, acquired to itself the power of inflicting the severest penalties on those it deemed delinquents, and even of condemning them to the most barbarous deaths’.” *The image of the Beast*, says a learned Apocalyptical writer of the last century, is



‘an Ecclesiastical Power, equal to the Secular Power for the universality of its jurisdiction. Indeed what kind of power within the same bounds and territories can it *possibly* be, but ecclesiastical, that can be a *living image* of the Secular, exercising supreme authority at the same time with it, and in the same places, as this is described?’ Thus prior to the dissolution of the Roman empire, ‘the patriarchs, archbishops, and bishops, had their ranks and places every where according to the divisions of the provinces of the state; and the name of the ecclesiastical dioceses did arise from the distinction of the several civil dioceses of the empire by Constantine. And it is established by the canons of two synods, that if any city were newly raised by the emperor, the ecclesiastical dignities there should be conformed to it. So that the church and state did run parallel to one another through the whole body of the Roman empire, just like the arteries and veins in the body of man, and observed the same proportion every where to one another<sup>18</sup>.’ ‘When Christianity,’ says sir Michael Foster, ‘became the established religion of the empire, and church and state became one body, considered only in different views and under different relations; the *ecclesiastical* and *civil* laws of the empire flowed from one and the same source, Imperial rescripts<sup>19</sup>.’

*And he caused all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hands, or in their foreheads.* ‘We must understand,’ says bp. Newton, ‘that it was customary among the ancients, for servants to receive the mark of their master, and soldiers of their general, and those who were devoted to any particular deity, of the particular deity to whom they were devoted.’ Hence, says Dr. Lancaster, such marks became marks of servitude. Now ‘*the hand*,’ says he, ‘is the symbol of action and hard labour: *the forehead* signifies the public profession. The whole shews, that it is re-

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18 Cressener’s Dem. of the Pr. Appal. of the Apoc. p. 246.

19 Examinat. of Bp. Gibson’s Codex. p. 122.

quired that all men give assistance to pursue the designs of the Beast and its false Prophet, or at least to make a public profession of servitude.' *And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the Beast, or the number of his name.* 'That which does the best open the mystery of these expressions,' says Dr. Cressener, 'is that observation of Grotius upon this place, that it was a common fashion in St. John's time for every Heathen God to have a particular society, or fraternity belonging to him; and the way of admitting any into these fraternities was, 1. By giving them some hieroglyphic *mark* in their *hands* or *forehead*, which was accounted sacred to that particular God; as that of an ivy-leaf to own themselves of the fraternity of Bacchus. 2. By sealing them with *the letters of the name* of that God. And 3. with that *number*, which the Greek letters of their name did make up; for the numeral cyphers of the Greeks were the letters of the alphabet<sup>20</sup>.' Those who have *the Mark of the Beast*,' I am again quoting from Dr. Lancaster, 'may be such whose *constant* purpose it is to defend the worship of the Beast, being active and vigorous therein. Those who have *the name of the Beast* are such who are known to be slaves or followers by his name being called upon them; the imposing of a name betokening the subjection of the party named to the imposer. And therefore slaves were new named by their masters, and marked, anciently, with their masters names, that it might be publicly known whose slaves they were. Those who have *the Number of the Name of the Beast* may be such as are his worshippers in a private manner, and discover themselves to be so by some private mark.—To prohibit persons from buying and selling is to banish them from public society, and to exclude them from the benefit or protection of the laws. And this has been done by the false Prophet against

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<sup>20</sup> Dem. of the Pr. Appl. of the Apoc. p. 274. Thus 'the name of Thouth or the Egyptian Mercury was signified by the number 1218; the name of Jupiter, as Η' αργη or the beginning of things, by the number 717: and the name of the sun, as ης good, 'ης the author of rain, by the number 608.' Bp. Newton.

those who would not embrace his religion, or submit to his authority.'

'If,' says Mr. Evanson, 'we understand the prophet's *buying and selling* in the literal sense, the excommunication of heretics, that is, of those who profess not the theological tenets by law established, affords us the most convincing proof of the full completion of this part of the prophetic vision. But it is to be observed, that the language of this prophecy is almost every where figurative. And, since the apostate church is called *the city Babylon*, and, in the eighteenth chapter, is represented as carrying on a most extensive and gainful traffic, and her teachers are described as *merchants*: the causing that *no man might buy or sell* who wore not the badge of servitude to the religion of the civil magistrate, may, with great reason, be interpreted to signify the prohibiting all persons from giving or receiving any religious instructions, but what were conformable to that standard of belief, which the ruling powers, for the time being, decreed to be truly orthodox<sup>21</sup>.'

That the influence of the two-horned Beast, the representative of the antichristian priesthood, has for centuries been diminishing, that his power is now greatly decayed, and that the existing circumstances of the world threaten the downfall of every remnant of spiritual usurpation, are circumstances which may be reflected on with no small degree of pleasure, by the friend of liberty, by the advocate of free inquiry, and the genuine lover of the gospel.

After the two-horned and ten-horned Beasts have been so diffusely illustrated, the symbol of *the Dragon* ought not to be passed over altogether in silence; and the rather, because the passage cited from bp. Hurd, wherein he asserts 'it to be the symbol of the Old Roman Government in its Pagan state, stands in need of explication.

With respect to *the Dragon*, that is mentioned in several parts of ch. xii. and xiii. what the prelate asserts is perfectly true; for there its meaning is manifestly restricted; being

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21 Let. to bp. Hurd, p. 59.

described with the emblems of the Roman Empire, as *having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads*<sup>22</sup>. But it follows not, therefore, that where it stands separate from any of these emblems, it should still bear a sense equally limited. In those other chapters, ch. xvi. and xx. where *the Dragon* is introduced, its meaning must indeed of necessity be different; because it is there spoken of as existing at a time *still future*, and therefore many centuries posterior to the dissolution of the empire of Pagan Rome. The fact accordingly appears to be this, that whilst the ten-horned Beast is the representative only of the modern antichristian governments established in the Western part of the Roman Empire; *the Dragon*, being employed as a symbol of larger import, is put for Monarchical Tyranny in general. And that I may not be suspected of arbitrarily annexing to it this meaning, I shall refer to the testimony of three very ancient writers, Horapollo, Manetho, and Achmet, whose authority, great as it is, has not I believe been hitherto appealed to upon this subject. Of these the two former were Egyptians. The one, Horapollo, was the author of a short treatise on Hieroglyphics, which is still extant, having been translated out of the Egyptian, into the Greek, language: the other, Manetho, was a learned priest of Heliopolis, who, about the year 258 before the Christian æra, and by command of Ptolemy Philadelphus, wrote a great historic work, of which some fragments are preserved in ancient writers. We learn from Horapollo, that the figure of a serpent was a well-known hieroglyphic for a king<sup>23</sup>: we are told by Manetho, that *Ἦ*, which in the Egyptian language signifies a serpent, in *the Sacred Dialect* signified also a king<sup>24</sup>: and we are informed by Achmet that ο δράκων, that is to say, the serpent of

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22 XII. 3. Wolfius upon this verse (in his *Curæ Philologicæ*) thinks it worthy of remark, that, in the time of St. John, the Dragan began to be represented on the military standards of the Roman emperors.

23 Horapollinis Hieroglyphica, lib. i. cap. 59, 60, 61, 63, 64.

24 Apud Josephum contra Apionem, l. i. c. 14. See Warburton's *Legat.* vol. ii. p. 141.



the larger and more destructive kind, which we have thought proper to translate *the dragon*, was regarded, not only by the Egyptians, but likewise by the Persians and Indians, as an established emblem of a monarch<sup>25</sup>. Now it is the declaration of bp. Hurd, that ‘the prophetic style ABOUNDS in hieroglyphic symbols, properly so called<sup>26</sup>.’

As passages from Daubuz have been repeatedly cited, in the present and in the preceding chapter, and will again be cited, the reader perhaps, in the course of the work, may feel some curiosity with respect to the man, to whom the Christian world is so much indebted for fixing the meaning of the symbolic language; and as his merit was overlooked, and himself scantily provided for in his own life-time, I do on that account experience, like the writer of the subsequent account, the greater pleasure in introducing a just tribute of respect to his memory. Charles Daubuz ‘was born in the province of Guienne in France. His only surviving parent, Julia Daubuz, professing the reformed religion, was driven in 1686 from her native country by that relentless persecution, which preceded the revocation of the edict of Nantes. She, with her family, found an asylum in England. Charles her son, destined to the ministry from his earliest years, was admitted a sizer of Queen’s College,’ Cambridge, Jan. 10, 1689; and, about 10 years afterwards, was presented ‘to the vicarage of Brotherton, a small village near Ferry-Bridge in the West-Riding of Yorkshire. This vicarage, of the annual value of sixty or seventy pounds; was all the preferment he ever enjoyed. To support a numerous and infant family, (for at his death he left a widow and eight children, the eldest of whom was not fourteen years old) he was under the necessity of engaging himself in the education of several gentlemen’s sons

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<sup>25</sup> Achmetis Oneirocritica, p. 259. Of modern writers I shall cite two. That *the dragon* has the signification of a tyrant, Matthias Martinus observes in his *Lexicon Philologicum et Sacrum*; and that it bears this sense in scripture Peter Ravanell declares. A new edition of the *Bibliotheca Sacra* of this learned Frenchman was printed at Geneva in 1660.

<sup>26</sup> Vol. II. p. 113

in the neighborhood.—He was a constant resident in his parish until the time of his death.—He always retained the character of a pious, humble, and benevolent man. His parishioners, who long regretted the loss of their excellent pastor, loved and respected him.—In the privacy of his retirement at Brotherton, unpatronised and unrewarded, with scarce a single smile of favor to exhilarate his labors, or to animate his pursuits, he composed the whole of his *Perpetual Commentary on the Revelation of St. John*, with a learned and elaborate Preliminary Discourse concerning the principles upon which that revelation is to be understood. Were I inclined to use the embellishment of panegyric, I might expatiate at large upon his singular modesty, his most extensive and strictly accurate knowledge of the Greek and Latin authors, his happy application of that knowledge in elucidating the words of prophecy, his intimate acquaintance with the symbolical character and language of the Eastern nations, his temperate and discreet judgment, totally removed from the indulgence of fancy and capricious conjecture. The following anecdote was communicated to me from the best authority. When he had finished his Commentary, he went to Cambridge to consult Dr. Bentley, the great critic of the age<sup>27</sup>. The doctor, as it is supposed, thinking that Mr. Daubuz would outshine him in learning and eclipse his glory, or, which is more probable, knowing that works of that kind, however excellent they might be, were little relished in those times, did not encourage him to publish it. Upon which Mr. Daubuz returned home, wearied in body and unhappy in mind, sickened of a pleuritic fever, and died in a few days. The book was published soon after his death<sup>28</sup>. The merit of this pious and truly learned man seems to have been disregarded in his

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27 The following fact is from Whiston's *Memoirs of his Own Life*, p. 107. Daubuz's *Commentary on the Apocalypse*, 'on account of the great critical sagacity of its author therein shewed, Dr Bentley had in high esteem.'

28 In the year 1720.

life-time; nor has due justice been done to his memory since his demise. We cannot but lament, that the strange and unaccountable predilection, which has long impeded the study of the Apocalypse and some other prophetic parts of scripture, should have rendered the literary reputation of this eminent divine less conspicuous<sup>29</sup>.

## CHAPTER VII.

### ON A PROPHECY THOUGHT TO RELATE TO THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

THAT the book of Revelation is involved in no small degree of obscurity was stated in the fourth chapter. In addition to this statement it may be observed, that the sources of this obscurity are numerous; and that particular difficulties are at present invincible<sup>2</sup>. Indeed, when difficulties are capable of being surmounted, their removal is often to be effected only by the labors of many successive commentators, and perhaps long after the completion of the event foretold. Thus, for instance, however we may explain the account of the witnesses in ch. xi. of St. John, some difficulties may probably, after all, remain unremoved. That explanation, therefore, which has the *fewest*, is

<sup>29</sup> See an *Address delivered to the Clergy of the Deaneries of Richmond, Catterick, and Boroughbridge, at the Visitation held in 1792*. By Thomas Zouch, A. M. Rector of Wycliffe, Yorkshire. The long passage given above is taken from a note, which the Author of the *Address* has annexed to it.

<sup>1</sup> See Hurd's *xiiith Disc.* vol. II. p. 98—105.

<sup>2</sup> 'Particular obscurities, that may be found *remaining* in it, ought by no means to abate our attention to, nor deprive us of the great advantage and consolation to be reaped from, the general drift and design of it.' Mr. Pyle on the Rev. Pref. p. 12.

to be preferred. This it is proper to premise, lest the unlearned reader should come to an inquiry of this sort, under the disadvantage of false notions, and should in consequence entertain expectations, which are unreasonable and not to be gratified.

It may here be remarked, that Mr. Fleming is not the only commentator, who has regarded France as being pointed out in the Apocalypse ; and that the Fourth Vial is not the only passage of the Christian prophet, which is thought to relate to that country. In truth, so many scriptural interpreters have apprehended a Revolution in France to be predicted by the apostle, that I am fearful of exhausting the reader's patience by that enumeration of names, and that crowd of passages, which I shall adduce on the subject. It is not to one country that the advocates of this opinion have been confined. It has been maintained in England and Scotland, in Holland and in France : and of those who have favored it there appears to have been an uninterrupted succession, for above a century and a half. Universally will it be granted to carry the greater weight, because it is grounded upon *the same passage*, upon a portion of the xith chapter of the Apocalypse ; and it will be abundantly evident, from the extracts to be alleged in the subsequent pages, that it is not upon random conjecture, but upon the ground of respectable reasoning, that the remarkable prediction in this chapter has formerly, with confidence, been applied to a future Revolution in France. But the very circumstance just mentioned, I mean the expectation being built upon one particular passage, however well it may be adapted to awaken the curiosity, and to gain the attention, of the judicious and considerate, will occasion this and the two succeeding chapters to be the less interesting, as it will throw over them an air of sameness. If a series of extracts be alleged,

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3 In the interpretations of the Apocalypse, says Mr. Lowman, 'we are not to expect demonstrations, or such proofs as shall be liable to no manner of objections.' Pref. p. 27.



taken from writers, who interpret the same prophecy, and argue upon the same grounds, in those extracts much repetition is to be expected. Sensible of this, I have omitted many passages of commentators, relating to France, and grounded on St. John's description of the witnesses and their symbolic resurrection.

If it be the primary design of the book of Revelation, as Mr. Lowman every where labors to shew that it is, to afford support and encouragement to mankind amid their sufferings, and to animate them with a hope of better things to come<sup>4</sup>; the prediction of such an event, as the emancipation of twenty-seven millions of people from civil and ecclesiastical despotism, must I think be admitted admirably to correspond with this design.

In a prophecy, of so general a nature as the Apocalypse, and reaching to the end of the world; in a prophecy, communicated to the beloved disciple of our Lord, and the last of the prophets in the Christian dispensation, who was empowered to predict a long series of events with a copiousness and a degree of minuteness almost unexampled; it is far from being antecedently improbable, that some mention should be made of a country so extensive and important as France, and that some trace should be found of a Revolution, which, in its consequences, has been regarded as likely to extend its influence to the whole human race, ultimately to meliorate the condition of Europe, and to accelerate the establishment of peace and liberty throughout the world. 'Daniel and St. John,' says bp. Newton, 'exhibit a series and succession of *the most Important Events* from the first of the four great empires to the consummation of all things<sup>5</sup>;' and that the French Revolution is to be classed among events, which are of the first importance in the history of mankind, few will be prepared to deny. 'Prophecy,' says the prelate just quoted in the last of his Dissertations, 'is, as I may say, history anticipated

<sup>4</sup> All prophecy, says Vitringa, is given with this view. In Apoc. p. 661.

<sup>5</sup> Vol. III. p. 423.

and contracted ; history is prophecy accomplished and dilated : and the prophecies of scripture contain, as you see, the fate of the most considerable nations, and the substance of the most memorable transactions in the world, from the earliest to the latest times. Daniel and St. John, with regard to these latter times, are more copious and particular than the other prophets.—Their prophecies may really be said to be a summary of the history of the world ; and the history of the world is the best commentary upon their prophecies.’

He who peruses the subsequent part of the present work will perhaps also see reason to believe, that the French Revolution is one of those great links in the chain of events, which reach from the promulgation of the gospel to that bright period, known indeed by the vague appellation of the Millennium, but assuredly announced by the voice of prophecy. Now if the French revolution should appear, after mature consideration, adapted materially to promote that OVERTHROW OF THE ARBITRARY MONARCHIES OF EUROPE, that DESTRUCTION OF ALL SACERDOTAL TYRANNY, and that INCREASED DIFFUSION OF CHRISTIANITY, which I regard as predicted by the prophets, and pointed out by them as antecedent to the Millennium ; if, I say, it should be apprehended, that it is likely, in any great degree, to influence and to hasten those three illustrious events, without the accomplishment of which this promised period of permanent felicity can never arrive ; there can be little ground for surprise, should it be discovered, that the book of Revelation contains not only some prophetic notices of the Protestant Reformation<sup>6</sup>, but also of another mighty change in the European world, which is also destined to accelerate the arrival of that glorious æra. Did the French Revolution tend not at all to produce any of these great events, I readily acknowledge, that, however splendid it might be, considered in itself, still its insertion in the

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<sup>6</sup> This I believe is the opinion of most Protestant commentators. See Vitringa in ch. xiv. 6—12.

Apocalypse would scarcely accord with that general harmony of design, and that dependency of one part upon another, by which it is shewn to be distinguished. Indeed no mode of interpreting the prophecies can be admitted to be the true one, should it appear, (to use the words of bp. Hurd) that, when interpreted, they ‘had no determinate scheme in view, and had, for their object, only detached and unconnected events.’

This will at least appear, that a Revolution in France, long before there was any probability of such an event, was supposed to be clearly pointed out in the xith ch. of St. John; and that this opinion, ‘whatever foundation it may, or may not have, in the prophecies,—is not a conceit of yesterday, which sprung out of recent prejudices and novel interpretations.’

The close of the sentence is the language of bp. Hurd, on applying to the Roman pontiff the predictions of Anti-christ<sup>8</sup>. Happy in rendering the labors of the prelates subservient to the cause of liberty, I shall cite another passage from another prelate, who was also bishop of Litchfield. ‘One way of knowing whether the *interpretation* of a prophecy be true, is to learn the time when that interpretation was made. For if it particularly and expressly declared the event that was supposed to be imported in the prophecy, before the event happened, or could possibly be foreseen by human sagacity and penetration, the truth of the *interpretation* is justified by the success.’

To the consideration of the xith ch. a large space will be allotted, on account of its importance, and because the persons who have hitherto bestowed much attention on it, since the overthrow of Gallic despotism, are I apprehend extremely few. The prophetic narrative of the witnesses in this chapter is, as Daubuz expresses himself, ‘a great Episode or Parenthesis.’ This will be apparent, if we at-

7 Vol. I. p. 113.

8 Vol. II. p. 41.

9 Bp. Chandler’s Def. of Chr. from the Prophecies, 1728, p. 349.

tend to its situation in the Apocalypse, placed as it is after the description of the sixth trumpet, and immediately followed by the account of the seventh. That 'we are now living under the sixth trumpet,' and 'that the greater part of this prophecy relating to the witnesses remains yet to be fulfilled,' is remarked by bp. Newton<sup>10</sup>; and doubtless, in *his* time, these observations were perfectly true.

In different parts of the Apocalypse, the European part of the Western Roman empire, and the great body of spurious Christians who inhabit it, are represented under the emblem of a *Great City*; and that part of the inhabitants of this symbolic city, who bear testimony against the corruptions of religion and of government, are denominated *witnesses*. I accordingly admit, that the prophetic narrative of them in ch. xi. may reasonably be thought to have a reference to those persons *in general*, who bear witness in Europe, during the famous period of 1260 years, against the antichristian usurpations of princes and of priests: and this is principally collected from v. 2. where it is said, *the Holy City shall the Gentiles tread under foot forty and two months*. Now the Holy City, says Vitranga, signifies the Monarchies and Republics that profess Christianity; and this he observes is the general opinion of Protestants. With respect to the word translated *Gentiles*, this eminent commentator remarks, that, in the book of Revelation, it constantly signifies the corrupt part of mankind, though they may indeed be professedly Christians<sup>11</sup>.

As St. John's symbol of the antichristian governments, which are seated in the European part of the Western Roman empire, is *a Beast having Ten Horns*; in like manner, when he here employs an emblem of a very different kind, the same number he still keeps in view. *The Great City* is considered in the prophecy as divided into *Ten Great Portions*, or *Ten Principal Streets*. To have described the witnesses, who appeared in *each* of them, would have been attended with a degree of prolixity, which



is repugnant to the genius of prophecy : on the other hand, to have given an account of them altogether general, and equally applicable to them all, would have proved a method, in a considerable degree vague and unsatisfactory. The middle course then, which the prophet is thought to have followed, and which will be admitted to have been a very natural one, was to point out the events happening in *one* of the Ten Countries, as containing a *specimen* of the sufferings, which the witnesses were to endure in Europe in general, and of the subsequent changes in their favor, which were afterwards to ensue. Conformably to this, we find, in the account of the witnesses, that separate mention is made of *THE Street of the Great City*, as in v. 8, and again in v. 13, *THE TENTH PART of the City* is particularised ; and thus it appears absolutely necessary to interpret this part at least of the description of the witnesses, as having a particular reference to some one of the European nations. The question then is reduced to this. To which of them are the predictions in ch. xi. capable of being best applied ? And on this point, after sufficient inquiry, it will not perhaps be found difficult to decide ; and especially if it can be proved, that they admirably suit the events which have happened in one country of Europe, whilst, on the very face of the prophecy, they correspond not at all to what has taken place in any other.

The account of the witnesses reaches from v. 3 to v. 14 ; and on each of these verses some observations will be offered. In v. 7 it is said, that *whilst they shall perform*<sup>12</sup>

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12 In our English version it is falsely rendered, *when they shall have finished their testimony*. Hear the learned Daubuz. ‘ *Και όταν τελεσωσι την μαρτυριαν αυτων*. And *whilst they shall perform their testimony*. This is the right meaning of these words, as Grotius, More, and others, even Mede himself, own it. For the word *τελεω* may signify *the doing of any thing in order to its perfection*, as well as the actual finishing it. So *επιτελεω* in Hebr. ix. 6, signifies simply to accomplish, without *any* respect to the end, any more than to the whole service : and the particle *οταν*, *whilst*, suits exactly with this sense : Mat. v. 11.’

*their testimony, the Beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit, that is to say, the Ten-horned Beast shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them.* ‘This,’ says Daubuz, ‘is such a Death, as becomes a political or collective body:’ and the meaning appears to be this: during the period of the 1260 years, whilst anti-christian usurpation is particularly prevalent, and whilst the witnesses are employed in opposing it, the Horns of the Secular Beast, and especially the Gallic Horn, shall overcome them, and they shall become politically defunct, being deprived of their liberties, both civil and religious. In agreement with this explication we find in fact, that it was not till many centuries after the commencement of the 1260 years, that monarchical despotism was completely established in France and in most other countries of Europe. But the arguments intended to prove, that *the Death* of the witnesses is political, and that they bear testimony against Civil as well as Spiritual Tyranny, are reserved for the ixth chapter.

These two great classes of witnesses were not, however, always to remain in a persecuted state. They were not always to continue politically dead. It is predicted in v. 13, that there would be A GREAT EARTHQUAKE, and that this would happen in THE TENTH PART OF THE CITY<sup>13</sup>. Now ‘Great Earthquakes,’ in the language of prophecy, says Sir I. Newton, are put ‘for the Shaking of Kingdoms, so as to distract or overthrow them<sup>14</sup>.’ Indeed since *the Earth*, as he observes in the preceding page, signifies *the Mass of the People*, an *Earthquake* is a very apt and natural symbol of an Insurrection of the people and a Revolution of government. But this symbol is sufficiently important to authorise a fresh elucidation of it in a future chapter.

<sup>13</sup> By this prediction the friends of the Roman hierarchy have long been embarrassed. Philip Pareus, speaking of it, says, ‘Ribera, from his unwillingness to explain this passage, prudently passed over it.’ Pareii Opera, 1628, in loc. Ribera was a learned Jesuit, who died in the 16th century, and composed a considerable commentary on the Apocalypse,

<sup>14</sup> P. 17.

The expression, *the Beast, that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit*, it is probable, may not have appeared very intelligible to the reader. The fact is, that when St. John says in ch. xiii. that, in the prophetic vision, he *saw a Beast rise up out of the sea, having Ten Horns*, he employs an expression of exactly similar import. Accordingly Daubuz, when he comes to this passage in ch. xiii. says, ‘this is the Beast, which is before in ch. xi. 7, said to ascend out of the bottomless gulph, and to make war, with the witnesses<sup>15</sup>;’ and he observes that *αβυσσος*, translated in the common version, bottomless pit, ‘signifies the same as *θαλασσα*, the sea<sup>16</sup>.’ Now the symbolic import of sea has been explained in a preceding chapter<sup>17</sup>.

15 To the same purpose speaks bp. Newton (on ch. xiii. v. 1). ‘He was said before (xi. 7) to ascend *εκ της αβυσσος* out of the abyss or bottomless pit; but here he is said to ascend *εκ της θαλασσης* out of the sea, so that the sea and abyss or bottomless pit are in these passages the same.’

16 By *αβυσσος* having been translated *bottomless pit*, a false idea is almost necessarily communicated to the mind of the reader; and in confirmation of what Daubuz has said, I observe with H. Stephens, that it is properly an adjective, and I accordingly apprehend, that *θαλασσης* may be regarded as being here understood and *της αβυσσος* as agreeing with it. Thus Æschylus has an expression exactly similar to that of St. John, only that it is not elliptical; *αβυσσον πελαγος*, the immense or bottomless sea. Indeed when *αβυσσος* is regarded as a substantive, its signification in scripture, as Suidas and Theodoret observe, is *a great mass of waters*; a sense annexed to the word by the most approved lexicographers, by Hesychius, Constantine, and Suicerus. Though this point would not have been dwelt upon at all, had it not been controverted; yet, as several important consequences have been founded on a different interpretation, I will farther try the patience of the reader by two short references to doctors Lancaster and More. The former says, ‘in Is. xlv. 27. what in the lxx. is *abyss* is in the Hebrew *Deep*, that is, the great sea;’ and the latter, in correspondence with this remarks, that *αβυσσος*, in Rev. xi. 7, might, very properly have been translated *the sea*. *Myst. of Godliness*, p. 178. Mr. Wakefield translates it *the bottomless deep*.

17 To prove that *αβυσσος*, as well as *θαλασση*, signifies in the symbolic language multitudes in motion and disorder, ch. vii. v. 4, of the prophet Amos may be appealed to, where (I am speaking of the Septuagint) *αβυσσος* is employed as an emblem of the Jewish nation in a state of confusion.

## CHAPTER VIII.

EXTRACTS FROM COMMENTATORS, WHO HAVE THOUGHT A REVOLUTION IN FRANCE TO BE PREDICTED BY ST. JOHN.

THE object which I have now in view, is to shew, what commentators have applied to France, the prediction of the figurative Earthquake, occurring in ch. xi. though, in their time, to human discernment there was not the remotest probability of an Insurrection and a Revolution in that kingdom : and I am also to give a detail of their arguments.

The expectation of A REVOLUTION IN FRANCE, Dr. Gill derived from this passage ; but he shall not here be cited ; because incidental mention will be made of his sentiments on this subject in the chapter next succeeding. If this figurative Earthquake<sup>1</sup> be regarded as affecting the Tenth Part of the Roman Catholic countries, Mr. WAPLE says, ‘ the kingdom of France may most peculiarly be denoted ; which was *the Tenth Part of the City* ; that is, the last of those Ten Kingdoms, which arose out of the ruins of the Roman empire, and gave their power to the Beast ; as may be seen in the catalogue of them, given by the judicious and learned author of the book *De Excidio Antichristi*.’ After observing that this prophecy has been applied to ‘ the kingdom of France,’ Mr. LOWMAN declares, that it may ‘ be understood very properly of some considerable part of the Empire,’ meaning the papal, and that ‘ it may signify the downfall of some considerable supporters of the Beast’s persecuting power.’ That it most probably referred to France was the opinion of a divine of

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1 By the *Great Earthquake* here mentioned, ‘ we understand,’ says DURHAM, ‘ the great commotions which usually accompany REFORMATION whereby kingdoms are put in an uproar.’



Scotland, Mr. LAUHLAN TAYLOR<sup>2</sup>; an opinion which was also approved by another Scotch minister of the name of WILLISON, who thus expresses himself. ‘Before Antichrist’s Fall one of the Ten Kingdoms, which supported the Beast, shall undergo A MARVELLOUS REVOLUTION, Rev. xi. 13. ‘*The same hour there was a Great Earthquake, and the Tenth Part of the City fell.* By which *Tenth Part* is to be understood one of the Ten Kingdoms into which the Great City, Romish Babylon, was divided. This MANY take to be the Kingdom of FRANCE, it being *the Tenth* and last of the Kingdoms as to the time of its rise, and that which gave Rome the denomination of the Beast with Ten Horns.—However unlikely, *this* and other prophecied events may appear at the time, yet the Almighty hand of the only wise God can soon bring them about, when least expected<sup>3</sup>.’

Near the beginning of the present century, sentiments of a similar cast were advanced by Mr. WHISTON. ‘*There was a Great Earthquake, and the Tenth Part of the City fell*; το δεκάτον της πολεως επεσε, the Tenth or last of the kingdoms into which the Roman empire was originally divided, and which arose the Tenth in order of time.’ But was the Gallic monarchy the latest in its formation? In proof of this, Mr. Whiston appeals to historic documents<sup>4</sup>; and, after the allegation of them, adds: ‘so this kingdom of the Franks is the last, the το ‘Δεκάτον, the Tenth kingdom in the order of rising; and in our age, has arrived also at that greatness, as to be at least a το δεκάτον a Tenth Part of the European share of the old Roman empire.’ Elsewhere also he observes, that as ‘the kingdom of the Franks is distinguished above all the rest,’ from being ‘last in the order of its rise, it therefore *denominated* the Beast, a

<sup>2</sup> See his *Ess. on Some Important Parts of the Rev.* p. 142. It was printed as late as 1770.

<sup>3</sup> Twelve Sermons by John Willison, M. A. Min. of Dundee. Lond. printed, Glasgow reprinted in 1745, p. 147.

<sup>4</sup> He quotes in particular Baronius and the learned Dr. Howel.

*Beast with Ten Horns*<sup>5</sup>. That *the Tenth Part of the City* denoted France was the opinion of COCCÆIUS, as may be seen in the commentary of that celebrated German. An apocalyptical writer of the last century, whose signature was S. E. as quoted by Dr. More, says, verse 13 of ch. xi. ‘seems to aim at some GREAT REVOLUTION, to the subverting of the antichristian state of affairs in one of the Ten Kingdoms the empire was divided into, and so introducing such a settlement as to be a prelude and pattern to what is to succeed in other dominions<sup>6</sup>.

These writers may soon be dismissed. But there are others to whom ampler room must be allotted. On this prophecy Dr. Thomas Goodwin, Jurieu, and an anonymous French commentator, though they wrote more than a century ago, all speak a language more distinct and more remarkable.

Dr. THOMAS GOODWIN<sup>7</sup>, head of Magdalen College, Oxford, who wrote his Exposition on the Apocalypse in 1639<sup>8</sup>, says, ‘By *the Tenth Part of the city*, I understand, as Mr. Brightman before me, some one Tenth part of Europe ;—*city* being put here, as it often is in this book, for the extent of the jurisdiction of the city of Rome.—This Tenth Part of it is so shaken, that it *falls* : that is, ceaseth to be a part of the city, or to belong unto its jurisdiction any longer : or (which is all one) *falls off* (as we say) from being of the number of those that give their power to the BEAST.—And as earthquakes are from inward mo-

<sup>5</sup> See p. 90, 227, and 235.

<sup>6</sup> *Answer to Remarks*, &c. by Dr. More, 1684, p. 71.

<sup>7</sup> The early part of his life was spent in the university of Cambridge, at Christ College and at Catharine Hall. Dissatisfied, however, with the terms of conformity, he relinquished that preferment which he had already obtained ; and some years afterwards, to avoid the increasing heat of persecution, passed over into Holland, where he became pastor of the English church at Arnheim. It was not till ten years afterwards, in 1649, that he became president of Magdalen college. See his *Life* prefixed to the last volume of his works, which are five volumes in folio.

<sup>8</sup> See Pref. to vol. II. of his works.

tions in the bowels of the earth, so this here may seem to arise from within that kingdom itself.' He thinks it probable, that FRANCE may be this country : and that in this Revolution men will be deprived ' of their NAMES and TITLES, which are to be rooted out for ever, and condemned to perpetual forgetfulness ;' and that the Titles and Dignities thus abolished will be extremely numerous. Of FRANCE he also supposes, that it may ' have the honor to have the last great stroke in the ruining of Rome :' and he apprehends<sup>9</sup> that this figurative earthquake, though happening only in one country, may extend its effects to others, so that ' a great shaking of States,' as well political, as ecclesiastical, may be intended<sup>10</sup>.

The words of our translation are: *And the same hour was there a Great Earthquake, and the Tenth Part of the City fell, and in the Earthquake were slain of men seven thousand.* Some of my readers will probably ask with surprise, is it from such a passage as this, which appears to be completely silent on the question, that Dr. Goodwin derives the abolition of titles? Let them, however, more narrowly inspect the prediction of St. John, and perhaps they will rather be disposed to wonder, that it should not have been oftener viewed in the same light. The fact is, that commentators have been accustomed to view it through a false medium. The original of the latter clause is: *και απεκληανθησαν εν τω σεισμω ονομαζα ανθρωπων χιλιαδες ιπτα.* This might with propriety be rendered: *and in this commotion the names or titles of men<sup>11</sup> being many in number were destroyed<sup>12</sup>,* or, to use a more appropriate word, *were abolished.*

9 'THIS INSURRECTION, OR RISING OF THE PEOPLE, in the Tenth Part of the City,' he elsewhere observes (p. 172), 'ends in the ruin of Rome.'

10 Goodwin's Works, 1683, vol. II. p. 173---178.

11 The prophetic descriptions are sometimes literal, even when they appear most figurative.' Hurd, vol. II. p. 102.

12 For a translation, thus widely differing from the common one, substantial reasons ought to be alleged. Of every word, which admits of any degree of doubt, a separate notice shall therefore be taken.

But it was not to be expected, that an event, altogether so unlooked for, so improbable, and so alarming to many, as the abolition of titles, although it were predicted with all possible clearness, should be rightly understood by the

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I scarcely need observe, that ἀπεκλινθησαν is a 1st aorist, from ἀποκλείω; and that ἀποκλείω is translated in the lexicons not only by *occido*, but by *aboleo* to abolish, and by *perimo*, the proper meaning of which is to take away wholly or to destroy. It has exactly this sense in ch. ix. v. 5. St. John speaking of the Saracens or symbolic locusts, says, *and to them it was given, ἵνα μὴ ἀποκλείωσιν αὐτοὺς, that they should not destroy them.* This ‘is to be explained,’ says Daubuz, ‘according to the nature of the subject.—It signifies not that individuals shall not be slain; for as these locusts are armies of men, it cannot be imagined that armies can come into other countries to plunder, without shedding of blood. Nay, their torment implies a great slaughter; but the exception of *not killing* must be understood to imply, that the locusts are not quite *to make an end* of these men.’ With respect to the number 7000, Goodwin, Vitringa, and many other writers justly observe, that it is an indefinite number, ‘put for many;’ and the former of these commentators adds, that this mode of ‘joining names and men together is not to be found in the whole book of God.’ In Mede (*Commentationes Apocalyptice*, lib. III.) a similar observation occurs, Not to mention that none of the Greek M. S. omit ὀνόματα, and that Joseph Mede (lib. III. of the Latin work just mentioned) has accordingly translated it by *nomina*, I have consulted the version called the Vulgate and that of Erasmus, and they both agree in giving the words *nomina hominum septem millia*: and I may be permitted to observe, that, in determining the readings of the Sacred Text, the Vulgate, in the opinion of Mill, of Simon, of Bengelius, and of other distinguished critics (see Michaelis’s *Lect.* Lond. 1761, sect. lxvii.) is of such antiquity as to carry with it an unrivalled authority. Our old English bibles speak a similar language. The same expression, *the names of men*, was not only preserved in the obsolete translation of Wickliffe, but in that of a subsequent date, which was published by national authority. Whence then, it may be asked, were the revisers of our English version induced to hazard so important an omission? This I will endeavor to explain. They were led to innovate by their misconception of the passage, and by the manifest absurdity of the existing translation. In our older testaments it stood thus: *and in the earthquakes were slaine names of men seven thousande.* To speak of names being slain was felt to be language grossly inadmissible; but our scriptural emendators knew not how to reconcile the two ideas, and they therefore cut away the difficulty at once, by expelling one of the words. They ventured not, however, on this step, without some shew of caution. Whilst the present translation was introduced by them into the text, the excluded word was sometimes suffered to take refuge in the margin.



generality of interpreters : or, if understood, that it should always receive an undisguised explication. Dr. Goodwin is not, however, the only writer, who has commented on this particular clause with some degree of freedom. This prediction is perhaps directed, says Mr. Kershaw, against men of rank as well civil as ecclesiastical. ‘ And seems to imply the utter ruin of these ORDERS OF MEN, in the place where the earthquake happens<sup>13</sup>.’ Mr. Pyle, speaking of this text and of the tyrannic power of Antichrist, says, it ‘ will lose a *tenth* part of the dominions it was possessed of; and a *vast number of the dignities*, honors, and preferments its votaries had enjoyed, will *die* and be *lost*.’ Mr. Whiston, after applying this verse to France, says (though it must be acknowledged with a darkness of diction), ‘ in that earthquake 7000 *names* of men are to be slain<sup>14</sup>.’ St. John’s ‘ expression signifies,’ says Mr. Lauchlan Taylor, ‘ that, upon this event, no less than 7000 men of rank and eminence shall be deprived of their dignities. That the word *name* doth signify dignity, appears clearly from the 2d chapter to the Philippians, verse 9<sup>15</sup>.’ Even Dr. H. More, though speculatively a most zealous advocate for civil and ecclesiastical titles, has been led, from the clearness of the original Greek, unguardedly to make the following observations on the text. ‘ They are called *names of men*,’ says he, ‘ denoting that they are Titles, Dignities, Offices, or orders of men.—Nothing can be more natural than the expounding *the seven thousand names slain* of extinguishing those several Orders and Offices of men<sup>16</sup>.’ To the same purpose he elsewhere says : ‘ in that this number of seven is multiplied into a thousand, *it* signifies, perhaps a *perfect* and *durable* nulling all such offices and orders of men<sup>17</sup>.’

13 Ess. on the Rev. by Jam. Kershaw, Stockton, 1780, vol. II, p. 124.

14 P. 271.

15 An Ess. on Some Important Parts of the Rev. 1770, p. 15.

16 On the Apoc. p. 108; and *Paralipomena Proph.* p. 342.

17 Myst. of Iniq. p. 402.

Of Dr. Goodwin's ideas some found admission into the mind of bishop Newton, though, on the abolition of Titles, he is completely silent. From princes and from courts his expectations of reformation were indeed principally derived. Speaking of the papacy, the bishop of Bristol says, 'some of the kings who formerly loved her, grown sensible of her exorbitant exactions and oppressions, shall hate her, shall strip, and expose, and plunder her, and utterly consume her with fire. Rome therefore will finally be destroyed by some of the princes, who are reformed, or shall be reformed from popery: and as the kings of FRANCE have contributed greatly to her advancement, it is not impossible, that some time or other they may also be the principal authors of her destruction'<sup>18</sup>.

On St. John's prediction of the symbolic earthquake, DR. PETER JURIEU, or, as he is more frequently called, M. Jurieu, has very largely insisted, in his work entitled *The Accomplishment of the Scripture-Prophecies*. Whilst the university of Sedan continued in the hands of the Protestants, Jurieu maintained there a very high degree of reputation from the lectures which he delivered as the Hebrew and Divinity professor; and such was the celebrity of his *Accomplishment of the Prophecies* in his own time, that it excited Bossuet, the eloquent bishop of Meaux, to enter with him into the lists of controversy<sup>19</sup>. Many, says Jurieu

18 Vol. III. p. 292. The same opinion may be seen in Christopher Ness on Antichrist, 1679, p. 89.

19 To overturn its credit by the petty artillery of a pamphlet, the prelate knew to be a vain attempt, though no man could have conducted the attack with superior skill. He therefore published, in answer to Jurieu, a labored explication of the Apocalypse. By this artful polemic our author's *Pastoral Letters to the Protestants* were also combated. What degree of impression these publications produced, I have not been informed; but of this we are assured, that a performance of our protestant divine, entitled *A Preservative against Persons changing their Religion*, arrested the successful career of the *Exposition of the Catholic Faith*, a work of the bishop of Meaux, which had not only been approved by the clergy and prelates of France, by the pope and cardinals of Rome, but had been written with such consummate art, as to have induced almost all persons of rank among

in the second edition<sup>20</sup> of this work, have remarked, that I have spoken over-positively and ‘with too much confidence.—Perhaps some time or other, men shall know the principal reason, which made me speak in so confident a manner and with such tokens of assurance<sup>21</sup>.’ That he has spoken of future events *in general*, in a manner thus positive and peremptory, he does, however, deny; though he hesitates not to avow, that his conclusions respecting the Reformation of France, and its forsaking of the papal religion, are regarded by him as founded on somewhat more than mere conjectural criticism. ‘We shall see,’ says he, ‘such an admirable agreement, between the events and the prophecies explained, that shall abundantly convince, that what I am about to say, is not simple conjecture<sup>22</sup>.’ But so numerous are his reasons for applying this prophecy to France, that I can yield admission only to a comparatively few passages.

Having observed, that several events, related in the xith ch. of the Apocalypse, and there represented as preceding the Revolution in *the Tenth Part of the City*, are predictions of the tyranny exercised over the witnesses in FRANCE; Jurieu of course ascribes to the same nation the remainder of the prophecy. Certain it is, that the number of faithful witnesses to the rights of conscience has been greater in

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the French protestants to renounce their religion. But our author’s literary glory was purchased at no small expense. Apprehensive of violence, he was obliged, in 1681, to abandon his native land, and to retire into Holland for shelter, where he immediately received the offer of a professor’s chair in the university of Groningen. Declining however this invitation, he became minister of the protestant church at Rotterdam, and professor of divinity at the *Schola Illustris*, which was then erected there in favor of him and of the celebrated M. Bayle.

20 This French edition, which is in my possession, was published at Rotterdam in 1686. But, that there might be no suspicion of the ideas of Jurieu having been accommodated to the actual state of recent affairs in France, all the extracts, which are given me, have been copied, without any variation, from an English translation of the work, which, in the year 1687, was published in London. in two vols. 8vo.

21 Vol. II. p. 277.

22 Vol. II. p. 68.

France than in any other country ; and of this every reader of history must be apprised, who has a tolerable accurate view of the long and unrelenting persecutions which have heretofore raged with so much violence in that kingdom against the Waldenses and the Protestants. ‘ Surely,’ says, Dr. Goodwin, ‘ *the Place* of killing the witnesses must be where most witnesses are<sup>23</sup>.’ If this proposition be admitted, it evidently follows, that FRANCE must be the country pointed out in ch. xi. of the Apocalypse.

Mede<sup>24</sup> and bp. Newton<sup>25</sup> decide, that the prediction of the Second Angel, occurring in the xivth ch. of that sacred book, refers to those inhabitants of France, who under the name of Waldenses and Albigenses, roused a spirit of inquiry, and first shook the power of the papacy by boldly pronouncing it to be antichristian and idolatrous. By Dr. Goodwin this interpretation of the passage is deemed indubitable ; and he declares it to be certain, that the foundation of the ruin of Antichrist was then laid in France<sup>26</sup>. That

23 P. 163. Dr. Goodman himself observes (p. 176), that the witnesses of the truth in France did not only sustain the great heat in the ‘ Morning of Persecution,’ but that ever since they have shared in it more largely than those of any other nation.

24 P. 644.

25 Vol. III. p. 244.

26 P. 84. ‘ Constans. *upon the Apocalypse* shews, that the reformation of the Western church began in France by the means of Waldo, and that from this source it spread itself through the rest of Europe.’ Perrin’s *Hist. of the Waldenses*, p. 13. From Perrin also the passages that follow are taken. ‘ Thomas Walden, who wrote against Wickliffe, saith, that the doctrine of Waldo was conveyed from France into England. To which agrees le Sicur de la Popeliniere, in his *Hist. of France*, who adds, that the doctrine of the modern protestants is but little different from that of the Waldenses, which having, saith he, been received in the quarters of Alby, and communicated by the Albigenses to the English their neighbors, when the English held Guienne in their possession, was infused into the understandings of some persons, who brought it into England, and was as it were handed down to Wickliffe,—who, by his eloquence and extraordinary doctrine, so won upon the hearts and understandings of several Englishmen, even of the greatest quality, that a scholar brought to Prague a book of Wickliffe, intitled *the Universals*, which being diligently read by John Huss, increased and explained the doctrine, sowed a



other, and greater, transactions in the same country may elsewhere be noticed in the Apocalypse, he accordingly very naturally concludes.

To the Waldenses and Albigenses More<sup>27</sup>, Fleming<sup>28</sup>, and Vitringa<sup>29</sup>, think the representation of the witnesses in ch. xi. particularly suitable; and Mr. Whiston, in stating that it ought to be referred to them, says, their ‘churches were *never* wholly enslaved to the idolatry and tyranny of the church of Rome: as the most learned Dr. Allix has proved at large in two distinct treatises<sup>30</sup>.’ Mr. Whiston also and bp. Loyd were of opinion, that St. John’s account of the witnesses had a particular reference to the Protestants of Savoy; and it is remarkable, that the effects of the French revolution have extended to that country, and that, in consequence, religious toleration has been there established. That the prophetic narrative of the witnesses has long been deemed applicable to the Waldenses and the Protestants of France, appears from the mention of this opinion in the *Synopsis* of Poole, a work printed in 1676. The learned Daubuz, when speaking of those who have borne testimony to the truth in France, not only directs the reader on this point to ch. xi. of St. John, but refers him for the fuller satisfaction to the work of M. Jurieu<sup>31</sup>. ‘It is remarkable,’ says a late anonymous writer, ‘that

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long time before in Bohemia by the Waldenses.—Cardinal Hosius saith, that the leprosy of the Waldenses did spread its infection throughout all Bohemia, when, following the doctrine of Waldo, the greatest part of the kingdom of Bohemia separated from the church of Rome.’ Perrin’s Hist. of the Waldenses, p. 18. The monk Rainerius was a cruel persecutor of the Waldenses. In his treatise respecting them is the following passage. ‘Of all those that have risen up against the church of Rome, the Waldenses have been the most prejudicial and pernicious, forasmuch as they have opposed it *for a long time*. Secondly, because that sect is *universal*; for there is scarce any country where it hath not taken footing. Thirdly, because all others beget in people a dread and horror of them by their blasphemies against God: but this on the contrary hath a great appearance of godliness, because *they live righteously before men*.’ See Perrin, p. 11, 27.

27 Myst. of Iniq. p. 406.

28 P. 51.

29 P. 277, 458.

30 Whiston, p. 204.

31 P. 658.

ARCHBISHOP USHER, whose character for sagacity, learning, and piety, stands deservedly high in the scale of merit, should deliver it as his opinion, that *the two witnesses* were to be slain, not by the pope, but by the kings of France.' Another much earlier anonymous writer, the author of a dissertation shortly to be quoted, after observing that France was the country, where *the witnesses* 'bore their first testimony against the papal corruption; and—that they principally suffered here,' says, 'it seems highly probable to conclude, that it shall be likewise *here*, that these same *witnesses shall ascend*; and that they are *to ascend* by, or upon, the overthrow of those very enemies, from whom they have principally suffered: providence, by this method, coming home to the persecutors, and revenging the quarrel of his faithful witnesses on the spot<sup>32</sup>. Now who were their enemies? They were the very same *classes* of persons, who have actually been the greatest sufferers in the course of the French Revolution, and it was by means of their overthrow that it was accomplished.

But I am under an engagement to transcribe some extracts from Jurieu. With respect to *the Street of the Great City*, which St. John (v. 8), points out as the place, in which the witnesses of Civil and Religious Liberty shall be particularly silenced, Jurieu says, 'I cannot hinder myself from believing, that this hath a particular regard to France, which at this day is certainly *the most eminent* country, which belongs to the popish Kingdom.—It is the most flourishing state in Europe. It is in the middle of the popish empire, betwixt Italy, Spain, Germany, England, exactly as a street or place of concourse in the middle of a city<sup>33</sup>.' It may be added, that, when we regard *the Great City* as denoting the whole range of the different antichristian countries, the expression in the original (xi. 8), *ἡ πλατεία πόλεως τῆς μεγάλης*, *the broad way of the great City*, seems in a peculiar manner applicable to a

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32 P. 21. This *Dissertation* was published in 1747.

33 Vol. II. p. 247.

country so much resorted to as France. It is said in the next verse (v. 9), *and they of the people and kindreds, and tongues, and nations, shall see their dead bodies, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put into graves*, i. e. says Jurieu, 'the Truth shall be slain, but it shall not be buried. Burial is a degree beyond death, and is always joined with a total corruption and destruction.—Those who hinder their burial, are *the tribes, languages, people, and nations*, i. e. several neighbor nations<sup>34</sup>.' These nations, who shall be witnesses of the tyranny to which they fall victims, by continuing their intercourse with the people of France, shall not suffer the great truths of religious toleration and of civil freedom to become extinct among them. Thus England, in particular, by the boldness and depth of its speculations on toleration and on government, excited a similar spirit of inquiry in the writers of France, '*Not to suffer a person to be put into the grave denotes*,' says Dr. Lancaster, in his Symbolical Dictionary, 'that he shall be remembered, and not suffered to be put into eternal silence.'

It is said in the Apocalypse, immediately previous to the account of *the Great Earthquake*, that *they heard a great voice from Heaven, saying unto them, come up hither*. In explaining these words, Jurieu gives the following account of that Revolution in France which he expected. '*Heaven* is the throne, it is the sovereign dignity, which in a state is exactly the same, that heaven is to the earth, in light, in lustre, in good or bad influences, in situation, and in elevation. *From Heaven*, i. e. from authority, and the prince who reigns; *they heard* a voice, they received an order; not a small clandestine silent voice, but *a great voice*, i. e. a public command, a solemn edict; and this voice said unto them, *come up hither*.' Many persons, on perusing this passage, have been inclined to exclaim, has not this prediction been completely verified? Was it not

*from the prince who reigned*, when led to it by an unforeseen pressure of circumstances and imperious necessity, that the Revolution derived its immediate origin? Was not a *solemn edict published from authority*, inviting the people to co-operate in the accomplishment of a Reformation? Did they not actually *hear a voice*, did they not actually *receive an order*, issuing from *the throne*, saying, *come up hither*? Did not the *Tiers Etat*, whose interposition in the government had so long been prohibited, *receive a public command* from Louis XVI. to assist in the national deliberations, and to devise means for correcting abuses, which could no longer be tolerated<sup>35</sup>?

Jurieu, having related what he conceived would be the manner of *commencing* the Revolution in FRANCE, afterwards proceeds to point out its certainty, its progress, and its consequences. But previous to quoting from him, I shall again submit the words of St. John to the attention of the reader. *And the same hour was there a Great Earthquake, and the Tenth Part of the City fell, and in*

<sup>35</sup> The circular letter or *public command* of Louis XVI. convoking the states general, and inviting the three estates to assume a share in the legislature, in order to accomplish a Reform, has in particular been appealed to, as containing an exact fulfilment of the expectations of Jurieu. It was promulgated at Versailles the 24th of January 1789. For the subsequent passages in it see the New Ann. Reg. for 1789, p. 111. 'We order and expressly enjoin you, therefore, soon after the receipt of the present letter, to convene and assemble in the town of ——— the most proper of the three classes (*trois etats*),---that they may confer and communicate together on subjects of *complaints, grievances, and remonstrances*, and the means and advice they may have to propose to the general assembly of the same states; and after having done thus much, they are to chuse and name such and such persons, &c. and so many and no more of EVERY class,---all of them worthy of this distinguished mark of trust, on account of their integrity, and the superior abilities they are endowed with.' They 'shall be furnished with proper instructions and sufficient power to propose, remonstrate, advise, and consent to every thing, that may concern the present or future wants of the state, THE REFORM OF ABUSES, the establishment of steady and permanent order in every branch of the administration, the general prosperity of our kingdom, and the welfare of ALL and EACH of our subjects.'



this Earthquake the titles of men being seven thousand were destroyed. 'It is known,' says Jurieu, 'by all who are versed in the prophets, that in the prophetic style an earthquake signifies a great Commotion of nations, that must change the face of the world<sup>36</sup>.'

It 'being supposed and proved, that *the city* is the whole Babylonian and antichristian empire<sup>37</sup>; it must be remembered, that this empire of Antichrist is made up of Ten Kingdoms, and Ten Kings.—From which it is clear, that *the Tenth Part of the City* signifies here one of those Ten Kingdoms, under the authority of the antichristian kingdom. *A Tenth Part of the city fell*, i. e. one of these Ten Kingdoms, which make up *the great city*, the Babylonian empire, shall forsake it<sup>38</sup>.'

'Now what is this *Tenth Part of the city*?—In my opinion, *we cannot doubt*, that it is France<sup>39</sup>.' This kingdom 'MUST BUILD ITS GREATNESS UPON THE RUINS OF THE PAPAL EMPIRE, AND ENRICH ITSELF WITH THE SPOILS OF THOSE WHO SHALL TAKE PART WITH THE PAPACY. They, who at this day persecute the Protestants, know not whither God is leading them. This is not the way, by which he will lead FRANCE to the height of glory. If she comes thither, it is because she shall shortly change her road. Her greatning will be no damage to Protestant states; on the contrary, the Protestant states shall be enriched with the spoils of others, and be strengthened by the fall of Antichrist's empire. This *Tenth Part of the city* shall *fall*, with respect to the papacy; it shall break with Rome and the Roman religion.' But, says Jurieu, 'some space of time shall pass, probably some years, before France shall wholly throw off the yoke of popery<sup>40</sup>.'

36 Vol. II. p. 261.

37 Long, indeed, has this been an approved interpretation. To the word *city* or *civitas*, occurring in this ch. of the Rev. a large signification was annexed, not only by those early commentators, Brightman and Goodwin, but also by Fox the martyrologist, in his *Eikasmí*, published in Latin in the year 1587, p. 124.

38 Vol. II. p. 264.

39 P. 265.

40 Vol. II. p. 260.

It deserves to be mentioned, that bp. Newton, after stating three other opinions relevant to *the Tenth Part of the city*, introduces Jurieu as ‘a famous<sup>41</sup> divine of the French church at Rotterdam,’ who has given an interpretation, which ought to be preferred to those he had already enumerated. Upon this passage the bishop himself grounds the expectation, not only that ‘there shall be great Com-motions in the world,’ but that ‘*the Tenth Part of the city shall fall*, as an omen and earnest of A STILL GREATER FALL<sup>42</sup>.’ With this declaration Jurieu completely harmo-

41 On the general character of M. Jurieu I am not disposed myself to enter. I am aware that it was not without considerable blemishes. That he is a writer worthy of attention, some short testimonials of others respecting him will, however, evince. It may in particular be observed to be a strong presumption in his favor, that, for the apocalyptical writings of Mede, he entertained the highest respect. Accordingly his celebrated antagonist, Bossuet, styles him the disciple of Joseph Mede (*L’Apoc. avec une Explication*, Par. 1690, p. 389); and Whiston observes (p. 102), not only that he is a follower of Mede, but that he is certainly to be classed among ‘our best commentators on this book.’ From p. 727 of Daubuz it appears that he entertained a similar opinion of him; and Mr. Pyle (pref. p. 18), in his list of distinguished writers, who have most materially contributed to the right understanding of the Apocalypse, omits not to make particular mention of Jurieu, to whom also he often appeals as an authority in the body of his work. We learn from a treatise of the learned Dr. Cressener, which was printed in 1690 (*Dem. of the Prot. App. of the Apoc.* pref. p. 23), that by the generality of students in the prophecies, at that time, the system of Jurieu, which he denominates elegant, was regarded as unusually striking. Jurieu was the author of a great number of works; and an account of all, or most of them, may be found in the *Acta Eruditorum* of Leipsic. Their critique on his *Accomplishment of the Prophecies* I have not seen; but, in incidentally mentioning his confutation of Bossuet’s *Exposition*, they entitle it *celeberrimus tractatus*, 1685, p. 522. Elsewhere they also style him *celeberrimus auctor* (1688, p. 625), and *auctor multis scriptis clarissimus* (1687, p. 143) I conclude with a testimony from Bayle. Though an open variance afterwards broke out between him and Jurieu, they were, for a considerable time, united by the ties of the closest intimacy; and the former, in a letter written to Mr. Basnage in 1675, says, ‘I honor and admire M. Jurieu, and should desire earnestly to be near him, that I may improve by his great and incomparable talents.’

42 Vol. III. p. 126, 131.

nises; speaking of it as ‘a Grand Event, which must come to pass before the last fall of the antichristian kingdom<sup>43</sup>.’ Indeed this celebrated French divine says in a former page: ‘this period shall make greater changes in the world, than were ever seen. Nay, if we should interpret these changes which ought to happen, *only* by those which fell out in the last age; surely we may say, that never were greater and more surprising alterations. In less than 20 or 30 years, a great part of the Christian world was reformed. And at the same time there were dreadful wars, troubles, and sheddings of blood, in Germany, in Flanders, in Holland, in England, and in France<sup>44</sup>.’

Since many persons have been taught to believe, that Jurieu has been extraordinarily happy in pointing out the period, near which the French Revolution was to happen; I shall probably be regarded as chargeable with neglect for having omitted the mention of so important a circumstance. It is therefore incumbent on me to explain the reason of this omission. Mr. Winchester, after observing that Jurieu had foretold this Revolution and the abolition of titles, adds, ‘and what is more extraordinary still, he predicted *the Time*, when it would happen, allowing himself a latitude of ten years, from 1780 to 1790<sup>45</sup>.’ The editor of a pamphlet, entitled *Prophetic Conjectures*, says, that Jurieu had specified, that a Revolution would be accomplished in France, between 1785 and 1795<sup>46</sup>.’ And in a third pamphlet by Mr. Bicheno, this gentleman marks the following passage as a quotation from Jurieu. ‘*The Tenth Part of the city which here fell*, will, at some future time, appear to be the kingdom of France, where a Revolution will take place about the year 1785<sup>47</sup>.’ But, whatever be the cause, these statements, though they agree tolerably well with each other, are completely erroneous;

43 Vol. II. p. 210.

44 P. 219.

46 P. 57.

45 *The Three Woe Trumpets*, p. 35.

47 *The Signs of the Times*, p. 41.

and no such passage, as that quoted by Mr. Bicheno, is to be found in Jurieu.

The fact is, that this Protestant divine was *altogether* mistaken as to the *time*. This is evident, even from what is printed in the title both of the French original and of the English translation of his work, as well as from numberless passages which are scattered through the body of it. Instead of having correct notions on *the period* of the French Revolution, he believed, that it would be accomplished before the expiration of the last century. Persuaded that it would happen *three years and a half* after a certain fixed date, he says, when speaking of this date, ‘I strongly hope, that God intends to begin it at the time of the revocation of the Edict of Nantes<sup>48</sup>;’ an event, which had taken place in 1685. He supposed, that in about 20 or 25 years after France should have ceased to constitute a part of the antichristian empire, that empire would totally fall<sup>49</sup>; and he pronounced it to be *certain*, that, in *the beginning* of the next age, this ‘empire MUST see its end.’ ‘If,’ says he, ‘I should be mistaken 9 or 10 years, and that this empire should (instead of ending in the year 1710, or thereabouts) run on until the year 1720, I do not think that any could justly treat me as a false prophet<sup>50</sup>.—I suppose 30 years shall pass for the reuniting of all Christians, in the same communion, and that this union shall be effected about the year 1740.—45 years will be requisite to run over all the earth, and convert the nations that are strangers to the covenant.’ Then, says he, add 45 to 1740, that will fall on the year 1785, in which shall come the glorious Reign of Christ on the earth<sup>51</sup>.’ Wild as these computations may appear, they were not framed at random. It is true, that in fixing his first date Jurieu committed a radical error. But, supposing him to have been right in the *foundation* of his reckoning, he would not have been altogether unauthorised in asserting, that at the close of 30 years,

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48 Vol. II. p. 229, 278.

49 P. 20, 244, 276.

50 P. 279.

51 P. 58, 59.



and again at the conclusion of 45, some signal and glorious events might be expected to happen. This will be seen in ch. xxi.

The work of a countryman and a contemporary of Jurieu ought not here to be passed over in silence. It was written in 1685; and in 1688 a translation of it, now become extremely scarce, was published at London, entitled A NEW SYSTEME OF THE APOCALYPSE<sup>52</sup>. The same passages in the Revelation, which in England had been regarded by Dr. Goodwin, and in Holland by Jurieu, as capable of being referred to the future state of France, received also in France itself a similar application from this anonymous divine; though we are assured in his preface, that, in the composition of his own work, he had made no use of that of Jurieu. The internal marks of originality in this performance are indeed abundantly satisfactory<sup>53</sup>.

To the witnesses, who have appeared in France, he applies, like Jurieu, the principal part of the xith chapter; and, in the course of his remarks upon it, observes that St. John speaks not 'of *places*, but of one *place*;' and 'that *place* or *street*, which the text doth design,—seems beyond all contradiction to be FRANCE<sup>54</sup>.' And in a subsequent page, he not only declares, that he shall be much deceived, if there is not 'A REVOLUTION IN FRANCE;' but adds that it is not to be *questioned*, that there will be a surprising change in that country, not merely with respect to religion, 'but in reference TO JUSTICE, TO POLICY, TO THE FINANCES, AND TO WAR<sup>55</sup>.' Indeed the symbol of an earth-

52 Not two days had it been finished, before a number of French dragoons entered the residence of the author; and plundering him of all that he possessed, excepting this treatise, obliged him to flee for refuge to a foreign country. Of our persecuted author his English translator declares, that he knew no man, who has been more happy in his explication of the prophecies which are yet unfulfilled, or who has accompanied what he says on futurity with more probable reasons.

53 So widely did Jurieu and our anonymous divine differ, with respect to certain parts of the Apocalypse, that they engaged in an amicable controversy on the subject.

54 P. 226

55 P. 232, 233.

quake is a political one; and as the prophet declares it to be a *Great* earthquake, our anonymous author might, with reason, expect, that it would shake the whole fabric of the Gallic government, and extend its alterations through every part of it.

From the words already quoted, that *a great voice from Heaven* was heard, *saying, come up hither*, he infers, like Jurieu, that the French revolution would originate from the prince on the throne. He afterwards likewise observes, that ‘as it is the king of France who contributeth most to the glory of the papacy; so it shall be the king of France, that shall contribute most to its ruin<sup>56</sup>.’ Possibly it may be asked, is not this at variance with fact? On the contrary, it may be replied, it exactly corresponds with it, and the words of our divine have been literally accomplished. Did not Louis XVI. powerfully contribute, in various ways, to the progress, as well as the commencement, of the French revolution; and will it not be ultimately found, that the whole of his conduct, however it might have been intended to operate, has in fact substantially contributed, not only to the ruin of popery in France, but of the papacy itself?

But, in confining myself merely to the expectations of our anonymous divine, I should not do him justice. Of his *reasons* an extensive specimen shall therefore be given. ‘Some,’ says he, ‘will doubtless ask, what reason I have to understand FRANCE, rather than any other kingdom, by this *Tenth Part of the city*, which is *to fall* after the earthquake? My reasons are these, 1. I presuppose that the city here spoken of is Babylon, or the papal empire, or the Romish church, which is the empire of Antichrist. This truth we have already proved. 2. I presuppose that France is one of the Ten Kingdoms that were to be formed out of the ruins of the Roman empire.—3. I presuppose France is one Street, and one part of the city, i. e. of the papal kingdom. Nor can any one deny but that the Gallican church, or the church of France, styles itself by the title

of the Catholic apostolic Roman church; that the pope reigns there over what is called spirituals; that he hath there his ministers and agents; that he receiveth *annates* from thence; and that there is no arch-bishop or bishop in France, but who receives his mission and authority from the pope. 4. I suppose that France is the most beautiful and glorious kingdom of all those kingdoms which are tributary to the pope. They do so account it, by calling the king of France, the most Christian king, and the eldest son of the church. And it is worthy of remark, that, even in St. John's time, France was by way of excellency styled *the Province*; because of all the provinces of the Roman empire, France, which was then called Gaul, was the best and the most powerful. This is so certain, that the name does yet remain, and is attributed to the Southern part of France, which is styled *Provence*, from the Latin, *provincia*. It being therefore said in the text, that *the Tenth Part of the city fell*; the Holy Spirit did questionless intend by that expression, the most excellent part of all. So that it is from thence very natural to understand France by *the Tenth Part of the city*. Lastly, we have already observed, that it is not said that the two witnesses were killed, and that they lay unburied in the *places or streets*, in the plural number, but in *THE street*<sup>57</sup> of the great city, in the singular; which is as much as to say, a Popish kingdom marked out by way of excellency. And therefore seeing the Holy Spirit had the most excellent of all the Popish kingdoms in his eye: and seeing we have seen the death, which in so surprising a manner hath befallen the witnesses in France, we may without any difficulty conclude, that it is FRANCE, which is *THE Tenth Part of the city* that is to *fall*.—It is

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57 I meet with similar reasoning in earlier writers. 'It is not said in the *streets* of the great city, but in *the street*, to wit,—that nation where the witnesses have most eminently borne their testimony against Antichrist. *Apocalyptical Mysteries* by H. K. Lond. 1667. Part I. p. 23. Dr. Goodwin, who wrote his exposition in 1639, p. 165; and Haughton, in his *Treatise on Antichrist*, published in 1652, p. 117, have the same observation.

then *the city*, the papal kingdom, which is to receive a terrible loss by the falling away of France. Whereas FRANCE ITSELF WILL INCREASE BOTH ITS STRENGTH AND GLORY, BY THAT FALLING OFF AND WITHDRAWING<sup>58</sup>.

Speaking in the following pages of the monks and the French clergy, and of what will happen to them in consequence of this great Revolution, this able anonymous commentator declares his expectation (and it is an expectation which has certainly been realised), '*that their Societies shall be put down, and that they shall banish themselves out of the realm upon their not finding it to be their interest to continue.*' Indeed 'the first event,' says our divine, 'is the death of seven thousand *names of men*:' and he conjectures that this may be 'a figure, where seven thousand *men of name*, that is, of quality, reputation, and dignity. These men of name are doubtless either the doctors, who make a great deal of noise in France, in the Sorbonne, in the Society of the Oratory, in the Society of the Jesuits, and among the clergy; *or else* persons of quality, who are distinguished from others by THEIR BIRTH and by their honor—but we may take the words of the text literally and without a Figure. Seeing there shall be no more of that kind of Doctors who are distinguished by their Societies and Fraternities, no more monks, no more Jesuits, and it may be no more arch-bishops, no more abbots, no more cardinals in the kingdom<sup>59</sup>.'

It is observable, that this commentator, *when figuratively interpreting* the text, declared, it may refer either to men of rank in the state, *or* to ecclesiastics: but the abo-

58 P. 235—236. In v. 11. it is said, *they ascended up to Heaven*. Now says Dr. Goodwin on this verse (p. 170), '*ascending into Heaven* is used to express an obtaining of new power, freedom, and glory.' But of this passage more hereafter.

59 P. 236, 237. In another place, this commentator says, 'the vast riches of the prelates and of the other ecclesiastics, being the strong buttresses of the papacy; the loss of their revenues may very well be *one* of the means, which God in his providence will make use of to destroy and abolish them,' p. 264.



lition of titles of nobility was an event so novel and unprecedented, that, when he gives *the literal interpretation* of the same words, he does not, as the reader would expect, pursue his own ideas to their consequences, by pronouncing the words of St. John to be applicable *either* to titles in the church, or in the state, but passes over the latter in silence. He was perhaps apprehensive, that such an explication would have thrown over his whole scheme, in the eye of the world, an air of wildness and improbability; not to mention, that the language of prophecy, previous to its fulfilment, must, in many points, be *necessarily* dark and undecided.

By Jurieu an exactly similar course is pursued. He is *conscious* of difficulty being attached to the passage. ‘*And in the earthquake were slain seven thousand; in the Greek it is seven thousand names of men, and not seven thousand men. I confess that this seems somewhat mysterious: in other places we find not this phrase, names of men, but simply for men. Perhaps there is here a figure of grammar, called hypallage casus, so that names of men are put for men of name, i. e. of raised and considerable quality*<sup>60</sup>. But I am more inclined to say, that here these words, *names of men*, must be taken in their natural signification.’ Whilst, however, he gives the preference to this mode of interpretation, he understands not the words in a sense sufficiently enlarged. After stating that the Reformation in France shall be total, he says, ‘the orders of monks and nuns shall perish for ever. This is an institution so degenerated from its first original, that it is become the arm of Antichrist; these orders cannot perish one without another<sup>61</sup>.’ Thus it appears, that, on *their* abolition at least, the ideas of Jurieu were abundantly clear and decisive.

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60 So Wetstein explains the words, conceiving that they mean *men of Title and Nobility*. By Vitringa also and other commentators this explication is embraced; and it must be confessed, that this mode of understanding them furnishes a very excellent sense, and perfectly corresponding with the events of the French revolution.

61 Vol. II. p. 268.

I now quote from a work, written by the learned Dr. CRESSENER, and published above a century ago. After laying it down as certain and incontrovertible, that ‘by *the Tenth Part of the city* must be meant the Tenth Part of the Babylonish empire,’ and observing ‘that the empire is set out by the figure of a Beast with *Ten Horns*, which are said to be Ten Kingdoms, Rev. xvii. 12, 17;’ he declares that ‘*The Tenth Part of the city* may very well signify THE KINGDOM OF FRANCE,’ and that, with respect to the symbolic resurrection of the witnesses, ‘it is very difficult to imagine where this CAN happen but in the Kingdom of France<sup>62</sup>.’

After quoting so largely from a nameless French commentator, I shall introduce some extracts from another anonymous author, who was of our own country, and towards the middle of the present century wrote a pamphlet expressly on this subject<sup>63</sup>. But his train of thinking has, in a great degree, been anticipated by my citations from earlier writers. Having observed that with respect to v. 13, ‘the only inquiry is: *what is the particular state or kingdom, pointed out to us by the Tenth Part of the city*,’ he declares that the result of his inquiry is, that ‘those only give a true account of the matter, who interpret *the Tenth Part of the city* of the kingdom of FRANCE<sup>64</sup>.’ On the symbolic meaning of an earthquake this anonymous writer appears to have had ideas correct and comprehensive. ‘We learn by former accounts in this book, where the same expression is used, that it intends remarkable commotions in a state or kingdom; and such as are attended with a Revolution in the body politic, or form of government.’

62 Judgm. on the Rom. Ch. p. 85, 138, 139.

63 Of the title the following is a principal part. *A Dissertation on the 13th and 14th Verses of the XIth. Ch. of the Revelation: or, an Enquiry into the true object of the Second Woe. With probable reasons for shewing, that the Tenth Part of the City is descriptive of FRANCE.* This very scarce tract was printed for John Bird, Black-Fryars; and, though without a date, was evidently written in 1747, which the author in p. 33 styles ‘the current year.’

64 P. 7.

Accordingly he concludes, that in France there will be a ‘DISSOLUTION OF THE PRESENT FORM OF GOVERNMENT, AND THE INTRODUCTION OF A NEW SYSTEM, BOTH IN CIVIL AND ECCLESIASTICAL MATTERS, within that dominion<sup>65</sup>.’

Of the eight reasons which he has alleged, I shall notice four. ‘When the old Roman empire was broken into Ten Kingdoms, by the inundations of the Goths and Vandals, and other Northern nations; FRANCE was *the last* of those kingdoms in *succession* and *establishment*. It was after the Nine, and so made up the complement of Ten. It was properly THE TENTH in order of rising, and as such was the very kingdom, which completed the papal, antichristian *Beast*; I mean *the Secular Beast*, to which the papacy, or Second *Beast with two horns*, owes its existence and support. Hence it is very observable, that the Gold crown, which Clovis the first Christian king of France sent to Rome, is still called *Le Regne* (the Kingdom), as much as to say, that they looked upon their kingdom,—as now completed, by this avowed accession of France<sup>66</sup>.’

‘Another reason for the present application is, that France, more lately, in its extent of dominion, not only answers to *the Tenth part* of the European share of the Old Roman empire: but it is also for influence and power, *the most considerable* of all the other kingdoms, who originally consented to give their interest to the *Beast*.’

‘Once more,—it deserves our notice, that as France was the last of the Ten Kingdoms, in which the Secular antichristian Beast was completed; so it is certain, it is now the only one that has not yet suffered a *Revolution*.’

Lastly, he observes, that ‘the present interpretation farther bids fair for the truth,’ because France ‘is now the most powerful of all the Catholic states’; and therefore on a Revolution happening in this country seem to depend

65 P. 24, 25. In p. 17 he had observed, that ‘one remarkable effect,’ will be ‘a Revolution in Religious Principles.’

66 P. 11.

‘the fall of Antichrist<sup>67</sup> himself (the Western or papal however), and therefore *most* of, if not *all*, the grand events belonging to the seventh trumpet<sup>68</sup>.’

In favor of the idea that France is *the Tenth Part of the city*, I am happy in being able, before I conclude the chapter to appeal to a name, which stands so high in the learned world, that, on a subject like this, it is impossible to cite any superior authority. It is to Vitringa<sup>69</sup> I refer; a writer of the most profound erudition and the correctest judgment, with whom every biblical student ought to cultivate an intimate acquaintance.

THE *Street of the Great City*, mentioned in v. 8, wherein the witnesses are symbolically represented as lying dead, may, he says, be reasonably understood to signify, ‘as learned men have already remarked, some distinguished kingdom or country of Europe, in which so great is the concourse of men, that it may be regarded as being like a

67 ‘It has,’ says another apocalyptical writer and a member of the English hierarchy, ‘been justly concluded by some of our most eminent writers, that most probably France will in time be one of those powers, that will destroy the kingdom of the Beast.’ Burton’s *Ess. on the Numbers of Dan. and John*, 1766, p. 304.

68 P. 11---22.

69 This great man was born in Leuwarden, the chief city of West Friesland in 1659, and died of an apoplexy in the year 1722. As early as his 22d year he was made professor of the Oriental languages in the college of West Friesland; and he afterwards accepted the professorship of Theology and Ecclesiastical History. We are assured by Ortwinus, who was rector of this college, that, from the high estimation in which his academical lectures were held, there was so great a concourse of students to attend them, from Germany, Scotland, and every part of the Netherlands, from France, Poland and Hungary, that the rooms intended for their reception as auditors were frequently incapable of containing them. At the funeral of this excellent man all those attended belonging to his college and native town, who were distinguished by their rank, their learning, or their personal worth. *Vir erat, says Ortwinus, antiqua et prisca virtute et fide, gravis, sincerus, humanus, blandus, facilis, affabilis, in exprimendis animi sententiis candidus, colendis amicitiiis constans, honestatis denique ac pietatis studiosissimus.* See Ortwinus’s Introduction to the Funeral Oration of Vitringa, which was pronounced by that great Orientalist, Albert Schultens.



Forum (*or place of public meeting*), to the antichristian empire ;' and having observed, that the Protestant commentators *in general* refer the account of the witnesses to the whole of Europe, but especially to France, Vitringa declares his approbation of that opinion<sup>70</sup>. Their death and their resurrection are, he observes, alike figurative ; though the former does indeed, at the same time, include in it the actual killing of a great number of the witnesses. When arrived at the 13th verse, he observes, like Jurieu, that *the city* which the prophet there speaks of signifies the whole extent of the antichristian empire. ' What then,' Vitringa asks, ' can be more suitable, than here to understand by *the Tenth Part of the city* some illustrious kingdom, which, being under the dominion of Rome with respect to religion, was of distinguished rank among the Ten Kingdoms, and had hitherto defended the Romish superstition? It is said here in a figurative sense that it would fall, since BY MEANS OF THOSE MIGHTY COMMOTIONS, BY WHICH IT WAS TO BE SHAKEN, IT WOULD BE TORN FROM THE BODY OF THE ANTICHRISTIAN EMPIRE.'

After introducing Jurieu as a man ' most learned' and of distinguished merit, after giving a summary of his account of the witnesses, and attesting that his work had awakened in the world a very high degree of attention ; Vitringa himself declares that FRANCE may be *the forum*<sup>71</sup> *of the great city*, concerning which the prophet speaks ; and having done this, he immediately asks the following memorable question. ' If,' says he, ' other things should follow, and God should grant, that this most opulent kingdom of Europe<sup>72</sup>, and at the same time abounding with men of talents, furnished with all the requisites of erudition, should publicly renounce the Romish superstition, and take up the patronage of a purer worship ; WHO COULD

70 P. 455, 456.

71 This is Vitringa's translation of *πλατεια*.

72 That France among the countries of Europe excels in population and in power, Vitringa observes in another place (in Apoc. p. 723.)

DOUBT, but that the fulfilment of this prophecy might be demonstrated much more certainly and more clearly in that kingdom than in any other?' Vitringa's silence in this passage, respecting any overthrow of the civil government of France, may perhaps be conceived to indicate, that his views on the subject were altogether contracted; it may perhaps be thought to imply, that of any insurrection of the people he had entertained no idea, that of any political changes he had formed no expectation. But the contrary is the fact. Immediately after having remarked that *the Earthquake in the Tenth Part of the city* is an event which history must illustrate; he goes on to say, 'neither also is it perfectly clear from the prophecy, of what *kind* these commotions are; whether warlike, such as are wont to shake the world and subvert the existing government; or WHETHER THEY ARE SUCH AS ARISE ON A SUDDEN FROM THE INSURRECTION OF A NATION THAT HAS BEEN LONG OPPRESSED.' He declares, however, that 'the words of the prophecy appear to favor the LATTER sense.' And he advances it as his opinion, that, in the predicted catastrophe, some thousands would undoubtedly perish, distinguished by their elevated dignities, or noblesse by birth<sup>73</sup>.

Should France cease to be the patroness of the papal cause and the Romish religion, he expected that this Revolution would infallibly produce a change in other nations. 'The kings of France,' says he, 'elevated the Roman pontiffs to that dignity and authority, by means of which they have made such a splendid display in the world; and had

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<sup>73</sup> It is with a reference to v. 13, that Vitringa afterwards observes, that the nobility are scattered over France with more profusion than in any other country. With respect to the third clause of this famous verse, I will also refer to one other ancient, and one other modern, writer. In explanation of it, the German author of the *Clavis Apocalyptica*, which in 1651 was published in English by Mr. Hartlib, says, that a great multitude will be destroyed of 'high and great persons, chief heads and noble families,' p. 88. This earthquake, says Mr. Reader, will fall on the Romish party, 'and destroy 7000 of their Nobility and Gentry.' *On the Rev* 1778, p. 119.

they not protected them, and continued to protect them, of this empire of superstition and idolatry there would plainly have been an end<sup>74</sup>.’

## CHAPTER IX.

ARGUMENTS INTENDED TO SHEW THAT THE FRENCH REVOLUTION IS FORETOLD BY ST. JOHN.

THE prophetic narrative of the witnesses in ch. xi. will admit of yet farther elucidation. I begin with inquiring into their genuine *character*; and, for this purpose, shall first refer to two writers, distant from each other in point of time, though coincident in point of sentiment. The testimony which the witnesses give, says an early apocalyptical writer, is not only against the church of Rome, but against all false churches, who are her daughters; and it is not only against them, but also against the Ten anti-christian Kings<sup>1</sup>. The author of *the Signs of the Times* in the same manner includes among them, not only those who have witnessed against the domination and errors of the papacy; but likewise ‘all those who bear witness for Civil Liberty against the tyrannies of those,’ who have enslaved mankind. ‘Even wise and good men have not, perhaps, sufficiently considered the worth and importance of the witnesses of the latter description, in fulfilling the great designs of God’s goodness towards men; and hence they have almost always interpreted this prophecy as relating to the state of religion only; as if the civil and political state of man were held in little consideration by the Lord of the whole earth<sup>2</sup>.’

74 P. 723.

1 Apocalyptical Mysteries, by H. K. Lond. 1667. Part. I. p. 5.

2 P. 23.

In order to bring some decisive arguments to show, that many of the witnesses in ch. xi. are of a political character, and that their *resurrection* denotes a great political event, I must not omit what 130 years since fell from the pen of Dr. Henry More, a writer of no small eminence. ‘As war signifies opposition, so *death* or *killing* any changing their condition into worse, so that they cease to be what they were before<sup>3</sup>. And that this is a political death, or putting out of power, is plain, in that their resurrection is such<sup>4</sup>. A little farther the doctor adds, the Spirit of God designs ‘these *two* parts of their condition, namely their prophetic<sup>5</sup> witnessings and their divestment of all political power, which the scripture calls *the death of a people*, and their recovery again into a polity their *resurrection*.—By *heaven* is here understood the higher places in the political universe, unto which the slain witnesses are called by a *voice* from thence, *saying, Come up hither*. That an *earthquake* signifies political commotions and change of affairs, is obvious to any one to note.’

The *resurrection* of the witnesses is expressed in the following words: *and after three days and an half the spirit of*

3 *To slay the witnesses*, according to Dr. More’s explication in another place, is to tread down the people and to make them slaves. *Myst. of Godliness*, p. 207.

4 *Myst. of Iniquity*, p. 407. This was no hastily formed interpretation. It may be seen in another of Dr. More’s works, *the Myst. of Godliness*, printed four years earlier. After asserting (p. 178), that ‘their death is nothing else but a Political death,’ he there adds, ‘such is their *resurrection*, namely political, they being raised to honor and government, as Mr. Mede himself acknowledgeth.’ The sanction of another great name it may be proper to add. Daubuz (on xi. 7) says, ‘they are killed in a civil capacity.—*Death* is the destruction of the subject spoken of, according to the nature thereof.—So of a nation, Amos ii. 2, *Moab shall die with tumult*. This signifies, not that all the nation shall perish; but that—the nation shall be brought into subjection and slavery.’ Daubuz had before observed on ch. ix. v. 15, that, ‘the community, as a body political, hath a life.’

5 That any thing was *predicted* by them the doctor was far from meaning. See his *Expos. of the Seven Epistles*, c. 6.



*life*<sup>6</sup> from God entered into them; and they stood upon their feet. ‘That this *resurrection* of them has a political meaning, you may,’ says Dr. More, ‘be farther satisfied in my prophetic alphabet, from what I have there said upon that term<sup>8</sup>.’ Looking there, I find the following observations. ‘That *the resurrection of the dead* has a political sense as well as a theological or physical, may appear plainly from Ezekiel xxxvii. 9. *Then said he unto me, prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind, thus saith the Lord God, come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain that they may live. So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived and stood upon their feet, an exceeding great army.* That this is to be understood in a political sense concerning the restoring of the people of Israel to their own land out of thralldom and captivity, is plain from the very mouth of God himself in the following verses.—Whence it is plain that *to be cut off*, *to be slain*, and *to rise from the dead*, has (as I said) a political sense;—and that *resurrection* is a recuperation of such rights and liberties as have been taken away, and a deliverance from persecution, affliction, and bondage.’ In proof of this, our learned divine appeals to the oneirocritics of Achmet. This ancient writer says, in ch. v. that, according to the usage of the Indians, ‘if any man shall behold in a dream *a resurrection from the dead*, in the place where it happens justice shall be executed; for if unjust men are there, they shall suffer punishment, and those who are injured shall quickly be restored to their rights.’ In ch. vi. he observes, that, according to the doctrine of the Persians,

6 ‘*To live*, is to be in a power to act; acting and living, being, says Artemidorus, lib. iv. c. 42, analogical to each other.’ Dr Lancaster. Thus, antecedent to the Revolution, the French were incapable of acting, and politically dead.

7 ‘*The breath of life*,’ says Brenius (in loc.), ‘is said to come or be introduced into any persons, or into any class of men, when they are restored from galling oppression into their former state of liberty.’ This learned foreigner then refers, like Dr. More, to ch. xxxvii. of Ezek.

8 *Myst. of Iniquity*, p. 407.

*a resurrection from the dead* signifies ‘a deliverance from slavery and afflictions;’ and in ch. vii. that, according to that of the Egyptians, it denotes ‘an emancipation of the enslaved.’

Dr. More speaks of a physical and theological resurrection, as well as of a political one. To caution the reader against mistake, I observe that a figurative resurrection, as employed in the diction of prophecy, is restricted to the latter. Thus Dr. Lancaster. ‘Resurrection, *when used symbolically*, signifies, according to the Oriental interpreters, a recovery of such Rights and Liberties as have been taken away<sup>9</sup>.’ He does not say, it *sometimes* signifies this. It constantly does.

Mr. Waple, after observing, that St. John’s account of the witnesses in chap. xi. ‘is plainly taken from Ezekiel’s description (ch. xxxvii.) of the restoration of the Jews from Babylon;’ who till then had seen their country deprived of its liberties, and bending under the yoke of a plundering despot; adds, that ‘the witnesses were to perform the same offices in the Christian’ church, ‘as Joshua and Zerubbabel did for the Jewish.’ Now what were the offices they performed? They eminently distinguished themselves, whilst the Jews were politically dead, by being instrumental in the promotion of public prosperity, and by re-establishing the freedom and independence of their nation. Mede, More, Vitringa, and all the best commentators, do indeed unite in declaring, that they, as well as Moses and Aaron, are directly alluded to by St. John. Of this there can be no doubt, because a part of St. John’s language<sup>10</sup> is evidently copied from what is related in the Old Testament, respecting those four celebrated Hebrews. And what is the distinction between those witnesses? Moses sustained a political, Aaron an ecclesiastical, character. Moses emancipated the children of Israel from a

9 ‘So Latin authors have used the word *resurgo*, as appears from Ovid, Pliny, and Terence.’ Dr. Lancaster.

10 Verses 3, 4, 5, and 6, of ch. xi

*Civil* Despot; whilst it was the object of Aaron to preserve their *Religious* independence inviolate. Thus also it was with Zerubbabel and with Joshua. When the Jews returned from the Assyrian capital to their native land, it was the former, who established *Political Freedom*; whilst his contemporary Joshua asserted the rights of *Religious Liberty*. Now what is the conclusion which we draw from St. John having directly alluded to them? It is obvious. His direct allusion to them denotes, that the witnesses whom he describes were to be understood as sustaining a double character, as bearing witness against Civil, and against Spiritual, Tyranny. The learned Daubuz accordingly remarks in his observations on this chapter, that ‘the reason why the Holy Ghost represents them under the notion of *two witnesses*, is to shew, not only that their testimony shall stand true<sup>11</sup>, but in allusion to those *two heads* of *Civil* and *Ecclesiastical* power.’ Commentators, from not sufficiently attending to this, have been embarrassed, when they have endeavored to allege any satisfactory reason, why the witnesses in ch. xi. though confessedly representing a large collective body of men, are spoken of (v. 3) as only *two*. They are accordingly compared in v. 4 to *two olive trees*<sup>12</sup> and *two candlesticks*<sup>13</sup>: ‘which type,’ says Daubuz, ‘plainly signified, that those two heads<sup>14</sup> did maintain the nation of the captive Jews, both as to their *Ecclesiastical* and *Civil* state; as the *olive trees*, which afford oil, do

11 *At the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established.* Deut. xix. 15.

12 “*Trees*, says Dr. Lancaster, in the prophetic scriptures, are often the symbols of men. And as the olive-trees in particular are remarkable for their verdure, their soundness, and the useful oil which they produce, they aptly represent the witnesses, men employed in meritorious services and for the good of mankind. See Achmetis Oneirocritica, c. 200.

13 The witnesses are not inappositely compared to candlesticks, as being those who are highly instrumental in the removal of darkness, and who enlighten the public mind on the rights of conscience and on the rights of citizens.

14 Zerubbabel and Joshua.

maintain the light in *the lamps*<sup>15</sup>, the symbols of government. In the same manner these two witnesses perform *both offices*.' But it may be observed, that as Aaron and Joshua were ecclesiastical personages, while Moses and Zerubbabel were the patrons of political liberty; the prophecy itself teaches us not to entertain the irrational expectation, that, in *the Tenth Part of the symbolic city*, precisely the *same* individuals should always sustain this twofold character, and be equally enlightened on the subject of civil and of ecclesiastical abuses. Thus in France often have persons gloriously stood forward as witnesses against the errors and the oppressions of the national church, without opposing those which belonged to the system of government.

I have one observation more on this point. Since the two-horned and ten-horned Beasts, the representatives of religious and of political tyranny, constitute so prominent a part of the Apocalypse, and are represented as alike anti-christian and alike the subjects of the Divine displeasure, it seems reasonable to conclude, that *the witnesses*, when spoken of as *two*, and as bearing testimony against what is antichristian, have a particular reference to those *two* symbolic personages. Is it in the least likely, that when there is a minute delineation of the *civil*, as well as the *ecclesiastical*, Beast; the account of the witnesses, occupying as it does almost a whole chapter, should not relate both to the one and to the other? Conformable to these ideas is the statement of Dr. More. '*The two witnesses* in the Apocalypse are two several *kinds* of witnesses, as Grotius himself acknowledges;' and the doctor elsewhere expressly declares, that they may be regarded as opposed to the two-horned and to the ten-horned Beast<sup>16</sup>. That it was the opinion of some, and the *two* witnesses signify *two* different classes of persons, Cornelius a Lapide long ago observed<sup>17</sup>.'

<sup>15</sup> *A Lamp*, says Dr. Lancaster, 'is the symbol of government.' Whence it derives this meaning may be seen in Daubuz, p. 1013.

<sup>16</sup> *Myst. of Iniq.* p. 243, 403.      <sup>17</sup> He died in 1637.



The expression, employed in v. 11. *the spirit of life from God entered into them*, I shall perhaps be told, plainly intimates, that both classes of witnesses will be of a religious character, and zealous worshippers. But this assertion I entirely deny. Such as are conversant in the diction of the Hebrew prophets know that it furnishes no such intimation. The expression is the same πνευμα ζωης, here, and in the parallel passage, recently alleged from Ezekiel<sup>18</sup>. In the ch. referred to (xxxvii.) v. 14, God is represented as saying, *And I shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live*; which exactly corresponds to the expression of St. John, *the spirit of life from God*, or, as it is better translated by Mr. Wakefield, *the breath of life from God*. The expressions both of the Jewish and the Christian prophet are intended to point out the powerful agency of divine providence<sup>19</sup>; and are such as frequently occur in the Hebrew scriptures. On the words, *the breath of life from God*, Daubuz remarks: ‘this expression supposes a wonderful and unexpected effect, in which God hath more immediately resolved to shew his handy-work, or Almighty power in a singular manner. And indeed this is one peculiar mark of all the matters of the seventh trumpet, which are the work of God in a special manner: for therein he is said *to take to him his great power*<sup>20</sup>,’ i. e. to exert it.

Perhaps I shall also be told, that it is said of them (v. 3), that *they shall prophesy*; and that this is a word plainly inapplicable to witnesses of both descriptions. This objection is founded on error, and an ignorance of the extent of meaning, which belongs to the Greek word in the original. The word applies equally well to the Albigenses, to the early French protestants, and to the authors and defenders of the present Revolution. It is plain, that *to prophesy*, the word here employed by the translator, cannot in this place bear the sense almost universally annexed to

<sup>18</sup> See the Septuagint.

<sup>19</sup> Whenever the expression, *the spirit of God*, is employed in scripture, it signifies, says Maimonides, either *God's influence on the prophets*, or simply *the will of God*. More Nevochim, Pars i. c. 40.

<sup>20</sup> XI. 17.

it in modern writings, as signifying to foretell events ; because the Deity has bestowed on man no such power since the apostolic age. But it is not sufficient to state what the word does not mean. What it does signify must also be specified. I shall accordingly transcribe on this point the statement of the accurate Daubuz. ‘ The word *prophecy* signifies constantly in this book, *the Testimony of the Truth and the Public Profession and Vindication of it* ; which notion, as I have shewn it, is derived from the use of that word among the Hebrews<sup>21</sup>.’ To the same purpose Dr. Lancaster. ‘ *To prophesy is to bear witness or testimony to the Truth against Errors and Corruptions :*’ and by the French this has been done, in an eminent degree, and in the most public manner. The word *prophet*, employed in v. 10, has a similar signification. ‘ The primitive notion of a prophet, says Daubuz, ‘ is that of a witness’ of the truth<sup>22</sup>. In forming the character of those concerning whom St. John speaks, zeal, he remarks, is a principal ingredient ; and surely this is a quality in which the promoters of the French Revolution will not be thought to have been deficient. I have referred to v. 1. I will quote the whole of it ; after observing from Daubuz, that *the earth, and they that dwell upon the earth*, are established phrases to signify the corrupt and antichristian part of mankind. *And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another, because these two prophets<sup>23</sup> tormented them that dwelt on the earth.* Various are the marks of satisfaction and joy, which the corrupt and unprincipled exhibit, when they behold those, who proclaim religious, and those who assert political, truths, depressed and silenced ; for the

21 On the Rev. p. 34. Verse 3, which in the common translation runs thus, *and I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth*, is rendered by Mr. Wakefield, *and I will appoint my two witnesses to be teachers a thousand,* &c.

22 P. 874.

23 As the Greek verb *προφητεω* is a word of larger meaning than the English verb *to prophesy* ; in like manner the kindred word, *prophet*, is of more restricted import than the substantive from which it is derived.

knowledge, circulated by the latter, awakens in the minds of the former disquietude and the most painful apprehensions.

That there is much of dryness in the preceding disquisition, I acknowledge; but to shew, that the resurrection of the witnesses in *the Tenth Part of the city* is a political event, was a subject of inquiry too important to be omitted.

If, however, it be an inquiry of a political nature, it will be asked, what becomes of the witnesses of a religious description, respecting whom so much was urged in the preceding chapter? It may be replied, that wherever freedom is established on a foundation sufficiently broad, religious as well as civil rights will be secured; and accordingly the revival of the witnesses against *civil* tyranny has *included*, necessarily and of course, all those who have witnessed against ecclesiastical despotism<sup>24</sup>, and particularly the protestants. The witnesses then being no longer contemplated in a contracted point of view, but as those who oppose the antichristian tyrannies both of princes and of priests, a strong beam of light is immediately thrown over the following verses of St. John; verses which are expressed in highly figurative language, and have already, in part, been decyphered.

After describing the sufferings and depression of the witnesses in *THE STREET of the Great city*, he goes on to say (v. 11, 12, 13), *after three days and an half the spirit of life from God entered into them; and they stood upon their feet, and great fear fell upon them which saw them. And they heard a great voice from heaven, saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies beheld them. And the same hour*<sup>25</sup> *was*

24 The anonymous author of the pamphlet, published in 1747, which was quoted in the last chapter, and is entitled, *a Dissertation, &c. when speaking of France and of this prophecy, says, THE SECULAR POWER MUST BE SET ASIDE, BEFORE THE ECCLESIASTICAL CAN POSSIBLY SINK.* P. 16.

25 It should have been translated, says Dr. Symonds, *and at the same time there was a great Earthquake.* Obs. on the Exped. of Revising the present

*there a great Earthquake, and the Tenth Part of the city fell, and in this earthquake the Titles of men being seven thousand were destroyed: and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven.*

One of the first, as well as most difficult, questions which occurs, on the recital of these verses, is this; to what do *three prophetic days and an half* here amount <sup>26</sup>? Mr. Bicheno, the sensible writer of a recent pamphlet, after stating the obvious propriety of the period being darkly expressed, that it might not be calculated till after its expiration, supposes that the *three days and a half* are to be regarded as lunar days, and that they are the same with three months and a half<sup>27</sup>. Now three prophetic months and a half, Mr. Bicheno observes, contain 105 prophetic days<sup>28</sup>, that is, 105 common years, the exact period, dur-

Engl. Vers. of the Epist. of the New Test. p. 79. *ὥρα* is the word employed. That '*ὥρα* signifies *time* indefinitely both in sacred and profane authors.' Daubuz observes on v. 12 and ch. xvii. of the Apoc. and indeed any lexicon will attest that this is one of the most established meanings of the word.

26 'The *three days and an half* signify,' says Daubuz, 'that the witnesses have lain so long dead in appearance, that there was no hope, nor expectation of their recovery.' The emancipation of the French nation from civil and ecclesiastical tyranny was altogether unexpected. Daubuz, like Dr. More, observes (p. 515) that *the resurrection* of the witnesses, as well as their *death*, is political.

27 Months, says Artemidorus (ii. 75), 'are sometimes denoted by days; and Bengelius observes (p. 219), that Lewis d'Alcasar 'is inclined to expound the three days and a half of the witnesses by so many months.' Indeed Daubuz observes (on this verse and on v. 10, ch. ii.), 'that the terms of *days* and *years* must be determined by the *circumstances and intent* of the writer;' and that *ἡμέρα*, the word here used, may, in the symbolic style, signify *any* portion of time, provided it be a fixed period. Now a month is a fixed period. That *ἡμέρα* is often employed throughout the New Testament in an enlarged sense, the learned Th. Gataker has fully shewn in his *Dissert. de Novi Instrumenti Stylo*, c. xxx.

28 By the Jews and the Greeks, by the Egyptians, the Babylonians and Persians, 30 days were reckoned in a month. Now 30 multiplied by 3; with 15 for the half day, makes 105. That St. John reckons 30 days in a month, is undeniable. The same period he styles in different places (xi.



ing which the witnesses against civil and ecclesiastical tyranny in France were most completely suppressed ; namely that period, which elapsed from 1685, the memorable æra of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, to 1790, an epoch of still greater importance ; when the oppressive measures resulting from that revocation were annulled, and those never-to-be-forgotten decrees were passed, by which religious freedom, after having been so long proscribed, was so nobly asserted and so amply restored.

Lest the necessity of the time being involved in obscurity should not be deemed a sufficient reason (and that it is not I readily acknowledge), why *the dead bodies* of the witnesses are said (in v. 8) to *lie in the street of the great city*, only 3 figurative days and a half ; I shall, in order to explain the reason of this, cite a passage from Dr. Lancaster, the contents of which, conformably to his general practice, he extracts from Daubuz. ‘ A prophecy concerning future events is a picture or representation of the events in symbols ; which being fetched from objects visible at one view, or cast of the eye, rather represent the events in miniature, than in full proportion.—And therefore that the duration of the events may be represented in terms suitable to the symbols of the visions, *the symbols of duration* must be drawn also in miniature. Thus for instance, if a vast empire persecuting the church for 1260 years was to be symbolically represented by a beast, *the decorum* of the symbol would require, that the said time of its tyranny should not be expressed by 1260 years ; because it would be monstrous and indecent to represent a beast ravaging for so long a space of time, but by 1260 days.’ In like man-

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2, 3, xii, 14) 1260 days, 42 months, and a time, and times, and half a time, that is, 3 years and a half.

30	360	30
12	3	42
<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
360	1080	1260
	180	
	<hr/>	
	1260	

ner in the present instance, as Daubuz expresses himself, ‘the Holy Ghost was tied to the decorum of the main symbol, of a dead body, that will keep no longer unburied without corruption. From these observations it will I think appear evident, why, in the prophetic scenery, it was proper to represent the bodies of the witnesses as having lain dead, only three days and a half<sup>29</sup>, antecedently to their symbolic resurrection.

The time intervening between 1685 and 1790 was the period, during which liberty of speech was, with more than usual rigor, subjected to all the shackles of despotism,

29 That a manifest reason exists, why the period of the complete depression of the witnesses should be darkly expressed, has already been observed. Otherwise the most obvious way of understanding the *three days and an half* is either to explain them *literally*, or to interpret them as signifying three years and an half. But besides, that no events have occurred, or are likely to occur, which will agree with either mode of explanation; against both of them insuperable objections may I apprehend be alleged from the inspection of the prophecy itself. To explain days *literally* is unexampled in the Apocalypse and plainly inadmissible. On this point some observations shall however be cited from Dr. More, and the rather, because they militate against the second as well as the first of these two methods. ‘It seems exceedingly improbable, a single day being so inconsiderable a space of time to transact those things in that are prophesied of in scripture, that the Spirit of God should number out the time by days;—these pettinesses being below the divine majesty to catch at, and there being no examples of events that have been observed thus punctually to answer to a day, where prophecies have been numbered by days. How unlikely then it is, that *half a day* should come into compute!’ By none indeed, but some of the Romish commentators, has this very improbable interpretation been embraced; and ‘there are scarce any,’ says Dr. More, ‘now so ignorant as not to be ashamed to conceit these days to be *natural days*.’ *Myst. of Godliness*, p. 175, 177. Similar arguments Dr. More urges against the *second* opinion. That the prophet should descend minutely to particularise half a year, is, he declares, altogether contrary to precedent and to probability. The advocates too of this opinion understand v. 7 to signify, that it is *at the conclusion* of the period of their bearing witness, that the symbolic Beast shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them; and this implies that there has till then been neither any war, nor any overcoming, nor any killing of the witnesses, which is point blank against the truth of history. Dr. More’s *App. to Expos. of Dan.* p. 289.

and the two great classes of witnesses, those who proclaim civil and those who inculcate, religious, truth, were alike oppressed ; a period of oppression and of disgrace, during which they might, in the symbolic diction of prophecy, be emphatically said to lie dead in one of the principal streets of the great European city. That the voice of such persons was unjustly checked by the dread of pains and penalties, prior to the Revolution, is a matter of sufficient notoriety. But, subsequent to that event, millions have risen up to bear their testimony aloud and without reserve against the usurpations of princes and of priests ; and the account of their proclaiming this testimony, and the purport of it, have resounded, and still continue to resound, in every corner of Europe. Let it not be supposed, that the events which took place at the revocation of the edict of Nantes were of *small importance*, and therefore that the æra of the prophet cannot, with propriety, be dated from it<sup>30</sup>. They arrested the attention of all Europe. Then it was that the French monarch first became superior to all opposition and all restraint, and political despotism was established on a lasting foundation<sup>31</sup> : and this also was the epoch, when religious liberty was annihilated in France.

Independently too of any reference to St. John's prophecy, do not the events which happened in 1685 and in 1790 give countenance to the opinion, that, in the eye of

30 That the three symbolic days and a half were to be dated from the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, Cressener and Jurieu were both strongly inclined to conclude. See Judgm. on the Rom. Ch. p. 107.

31 'The court gratified the priests, and, in return, the priests supported court-measures, and helped Louis, not only to get rid of these friends to liberty and justice, but also to crush the parliaments, which *till now* possessed considerable power.' The complete extinction of civil liberty was left for Louis XIV. "For heretofore," says Puffendorf, in the style of a court sycophant, "the parliament of Paris used to oppose the king's designs, under a pretence that they had such right. That the king could not do any thing of moment without its consent. But the king has taught it only to intermeddle with judicial business, and some other concerns, which the king now and then is pleased to leave to its decisions." Bicheno's *Signs of the Times*, 2d Ed. p. 50, 41.

heaven, there is a connexion between the crimes which were perpetrated at the revocation of the edict of Nantes, and the calamities by which such multitudes have been so severely chastised in the course of the late Revolution? Have not the very same description of persons, who engaged with activity in the persecutions of the former period, been those, who in the latter epoch, have been as it were singled out to be the greatest sufferers? Is it not remarkable, that they were, in both instances, the royal family, the courtiers and ministers of state, the noblesse, the officers of the army, and the intendants of provinces, the monastic orders, and all the different ranks of the clergy<sup>32</sup>?

The verses of St. John I now proceed to explain, clause by clause. *After three days and a half the breath of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet*<sup>33</sup>. After three prophetic months and a half, i. e. just 105 years after tyranny had been brought to maturity by Louis XIV. (during which exact period the witnesses as well of religious as of civil liberty had been completely suppressed); the witnesses, who appeared to have fallen never again to rise, were raised from a state of inaction and civil debility to political life and energy<sup>34</sup>. *And great fear*<sup>35</sup> *fell*

32 ' Long has it been foreseen, and often foretold by pious and good men, that the innocent blood of the faithful followers of Jesus, poured out for many ages on the altars of antichristian idolatry and persecution, would at last be repaid by the just Governor of the world, if not upon the persecutors themselves, yet at least upon their posterity; and this seems to be the case at the present æra.' *The Rise and Fatal Effects of War, a Disc.* by Robert Miln, A. M. p. 21.

33 '*And they stood upon their feet.* That is, they were put into a condition to act, and resist their enemies; for so that posture imports, as hath been shewn before.' Daubuz.

34 ' France,' says an ingenious political writer, ' started from the dead repose of despotism, like another Lazarus from the tomb, and glowed with animated life and invigorating freedom.'

35 ' This fear,' says Daubuz (in loc.), ' consists in some measure in astonishment; for the word φόβος signifies both: ' and certainly few events have happened in the world, which have excited more astonishment than the Revolution in France.



upon them which saw them. A large and active part of mankind, interested in the support of ancient abuses, and especially the privileged orders of France and the other European countries, saw the rise and progress of the French Revolution with astonishment and with alarm.

*And they heard a great voice from heaven, saying unto them, Come up hither.* ‘The supreme power, by abolishing the laws under which they suffered political death, invited them to quit their state of bondage<sup>36</sup>.’ *WHATSOEVER* is set up on high to overrule the rest in power and authority, is,’ says Daubuz, ‘the heavens thereof<sup>37</sup>.’ Accordingly by *heaven* many will probably here understand, in opposition to the opinion of Jurieu and the anonymous French commentator, not the prince on the throne, but the general assembly of the nation, saying unto the advocates of civil and religious liberty, and unto the people in general, *come up hither*; rise to the rank of citizenship; and assume your share in the administration of government. In truth, this does appear to be the purport of this short invitation; and to whom, in the European world, has it ever been given, but to the French? *And they ascended up to heaven*<sup>38</sup>. Accepting the invitation which was given them, they were elevated to a high degree of power

36 These are the words of Mr. Bicheno upon this clause.

37 P. 293. To the same purpose he elsewhere says (p. 160), ‘*Heaven* signifies symbolically the ruling power, the Government, wherever the scene is laid.’

38 Daubuz on this verse says, ‘*to ascend into heaven*, signifies to be in full power, to obtain rule, and dominion.’ That this interpretation may not be doubted, this distinguished commentator appeals, in proof of it, to the prophetic scriptures; and to the ancient oncirocities of Persia, of Egypt, and of India. After observing that these observations are adopted by Sir Isaac Newton and Dr. Lancaster, I cite the words of Isaiah (xiv. 12, 13.): *How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations. For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven: i. e. how art thou fallen, O Babylon, from a state of prosperity and power; thou, who hast declared in the pride of thy heart, I will rise to the greatest height of authority and success. In the same manner does our Lord himself (Luke x. 15) apply the expression to Capernaum, thou which art exalted to heaven.*

and political consequence ; and this happened, not to a few, but to all the witnesses for Civil and Religious Liberty, and to the great body of the nation. And, to use the emblematic language of prophecy, they did not merely *ascend up to heaven*, but *they ascended up to heaven in a cloud* ; which implies still more. For ‘*a cloud*,’ says Mr. Pyle, ‘is an emblem of prosperity. *To come, with, or ride on clouds*, is to rule, conquer, &c.’ To the same purpose Dr. Lancaster. *A ‘cloud*, without any tokens shewing it to be like a storm, ALWAYS denotes what is good, and implies success. The import of the whole clause appears then to be this : after the revolution of some years, they were raised not only to a participation of power, but were very prosperous and successful. It can then be regarded as only in part fulfilled. Those who bear testimony in France against civil and spiritual tyranny have been raised to *great power* ; but their *great prosperity* is an event yet to be accomplished.

*And their enemies beheld them*<sup>39</sup>. ‘Their old oppressors and their abettors contemplated the change which was taking place, both with astonishment and malice.’ *And the same hour there was a great Earthquake, and a Tenth Part of the city fell*. But to state more particularly what was the cause of their fears and their astonishment, it may be added, that the Revolution was *great and sudden*. The French monarchy, which is one of the Ten Horns of the Beast, ‘or one of the Ten Streets of the antichristian city, fell, and its abominable oppressions issued in its utter ruin ; and that as *in one hour*. The progress of liberty, in the destruction of established systems, is generally slow ; and that which was ages in erecting is ages also in pulling down ; but the change of things here is not according to the common course of events ; the witnesses awake, the conflict commences, and the tyranny falls as *in one hour*<sup>40</sup>.’

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39 ‘*To see* signifies *to rejoice*, or *to be grieved*, according to the circumstances of the person affected.’ Daubuz in loc.

40 The three sentences, in this paragraph, marked with inverted commas, belong to Mr. Bicheno.

The symbolic earthquake involved likewise in it the overthrow of the ecclesiastical as well as civil governors. The Tenth Part of Babylon, or of the antichristian church, fell.

*And in this Earthquake<sup>41</sup> the titles of men being seven thousand were destroyed.* After what has happened in France, these words need no elucidation. *And the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven<sup>42</sup>.* The remainder, those others who did not originally belong to the party of the witnesses, were at length completely intimidated by the events which occurred; and discerning the necessity of uniting with the advocates of freedom, and of acquiescing in the new system which was erected, they did, in fact, glorify God, though not intentionally, by ‘promoting his grand and good designs in this change of things, which he was now effecting, in the overthrow of antichristian despotism<sup>43</sup>.’ But it is observed by Mr. Cooke, late professor of Greek at the university of Cambridge, that the proper sense of οἱ λοιποὶ, both in the Apocalypse and the gospels, is ‘the vulgar,’ or ‘the

41 ‘Though the Greek word σεισμος is usually translated an earthquake, yet it is of so large a signification, as that it is often used---of the Heavens, as well as of the Earth.---An earthquake, when great, overturns and quite changes the surface of the earth; overturning mountains, hills, and rocks;---and is therefore a proper symbol of GREAT REVOLUTIONS or changes in the government or Political world. It is thus used in the prophets;---and to the same purpose explained by Artemidorus, lib. ii. c. 46; and by the Oriental interpreters, c. 144, who there also explain it of a change, in the state, occasioned by new laws.’ Dr. Lancaster. See similar comments on the word σεισμος by Vitranga, in Apoc. VI. 12.

42 Jurieu on these words says, ‘This is the total conversion and reformation of the Tenth Part of the city, i. e. of the kingdom of France.’ Vol. II. p. 269.

43 From Mr. Bicheno this last clause also is taken: The whole of his explication of St. John’s words runs thus. ‘After a violent conflict, for some time, between the witnesses and their opposers, the former prevailed, and those, who had been rather spectators of the contest than actors in it, united themselves in their cause; and thus, though at least, many of them, might not be actuated by these views, they glorified God in promoting his grand and good designs in this change of things, which he was now effecting, in the overthrow of antichristian despotism and persecution.’

generality<sup>44</sup> ;' and then a different turn may be given to the passage, as will appear from the following explication of it by an interpreter of this verse. 'The unprivileged part of the community, affrighted at the progress of atheism (the imputation of which, and its studious propagation by counter-revolutionists, will appear portentous to their cause) shall give glory to the God, not of our Lord Jesus Christ, but of heaven ; the creator, the supreme, the eternal.' As the prophet indeed had been speaking of the privileged orders in the preceding clause, it is natural enough, that in the succeeding part of the verse he should pass on to the unprivileged classes, that is to say, to the generality. That the people of France in general, in their several districts, and the Convention in particular, at Paris, have publicly and solemnly expressed their belief in the being, and their reverence for the attributes, of Almighty God ; and that they have acknowledged his benevolent interference in their behalf ; are facts well known to those, who are acquainted with the recent transactions of the rising republic<sup>45</sup>.

The preceding extract I have *inserted* from a small pamphlet, written by a graduate of Cambridge, and entitled, *an outline of a Commentary on Revelations xi. 1—14* ; though that pamphlet was published after the present chapter, and indeed the whole of the work, was prepared for publication. *The two witnesses*, says this writer, who is a man of talents and learning, 'I apprehend to be two symbolical persons, the opposites of the *woman* of the xviith chapter, and of the *Wild Beast*, which supports her, and is mentioned in the xiiiith chap. and in the 7th verse of the xith. I understand them to mean, the Principles of Civil and Religious Freedom, of genuine Government and Re-

<sup>44</sup> *Revelations Translated and Explained*, &c. 1789, p. 186.

<sup>45</sup> The 1st and the 8th articles of the Decree, passed by the Convention May 7, 1794, are as follow. '1. The French nation acknowledges the existence of a Supreme Being, and the immortality of the soul.—8. The freedom of religious worship is maintained.'



ligion as far as they are connected<sup>45</sup> But it may be observed, that if the two witnesses do stand opposed to the two-horned and ten-horned Beasts, as I believe them to do, it follows as a consequence, that they must represent not simply *principles*, but classes of *men* actuated by a certain set of principles. The supposition, that the witnesses are emblematic merely of the former appears to me to be the radical error into which this ingenious writer has fallen; and it has occasioned him, in my apprehension at least, to give an erroneous explication of all that part of the prophecy which is contained between the beginning of v. 5 and the end of v. 11.

Against his interpretation of some of these verses I shall briefly object; previously observing, that he is an ardent friend of liberty. In v. 6 it is said, *these have POWER to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have POWER over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will.* Whatever the witnesses may be supposed to signify, St. John is here plainly and confessedly speaking of *them*; and yet the author of *the Outline of a Commentary* explains these words as pointing out the bad effects which arise from the misconduct of civil and ecclesiastical rulers, and from good principles NOT being suffered to operate. Whilst the prophet speaks of the power of the two witnesses, his commentator interprets the prophecy of their want of power. St. John (according to our English version) says in the following verse (v. 7), *and when they shall have finished their testimony, the Beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them.* This part of the prophecy the author of the pamphlet conceives to have recently received its complete fulfilment in the war now carried on by the coalesced princes against France, and in the effects, injurious to liberty, which they have caused to take place both in that country, and in their own dominions. But this passage I

confess appears to me incapable of being thus explained, whatever be the light in which we view the two witnesses ; whether we regard them as symbolic of *the Principles of Civil and Religious Freedom*, or as emblems of great bodies of *men*, who stand forward as the admirers and advocates of these principles. Surely the Allies have not succeeded in their efforts against the people of France ; nor, passionately as they might desire it, have they destroyed the friends of freedom within the limits of their own territories. This memorable crusade has likewise been impotent, not only with respect to men, but also with respect to principles. Those of Religious, and those of Political, freedom, it has alike failed of extirpating. Multiplied as have been the artifices and the deceptions of statesmen, and of those who confederate with them to plunder the public, the genuine and enlightened friends of the Civil Rights of mankind, were never, I am convinced, in any past period, more numerous in Europe. Loud and vehement as hath been the outcry of the bigotted sons of corrupt hierarchies, never were the principles of toleration better understood in the European world ; nor, since the first promulgation of Christianity, if a part of the reign of Constantine be excepted, has ampler latitude of theological inquiry, or a more unrestricted choice of religious worship, been enjoyed. The three next verses also (v. 8, 9, and 10) the graduate of Cambridge has explained, as relating to the war against France ; and they have, he conceives, been already in a great degree accomplished. In these verses it is said of *the two witnesses*, that *their dead bodies shall lie in the Street of the great city.—And they of the people, and kindreds, and tongues, and nations, shall see their dead bodies.—And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another ; because these two prophets tormented them that dwell on the earth*<sup>47</sup>. Like the early commentators referred to in

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47 In Mr. Wakefield's Translation it is : *because these two teachers were a vexation to the inhabitants of the earth.*

the last chapter, the author of *the Outline of a Commentary* concludes, that *THE Street of the great city* denotes France. Thus far I certainly am disposed to agree with him. But his general interpretation of these verses appears to me to have lost all color of plausibility, now that the combined potentates have been baffled in all the measures which they have adopted against this powerful republic. To the privileged orders, and the numerous partizans of existing abuses, an opportunity has not hitherto been afforded for expressing their joy, and for displaying a spirit of exultation, on account of the successful termination of the war, or the triumphant entrance of the allied armies into Paris. Their prospects indeed are as dark, as their designs have been nefarious. But let the student of the xith ch. of the Apocalypse peruse the pamphlet by the graduate of Cambridge, and estimate for himself the weight of the arguments which he has alleged.

Against the authors of the French revolution being regarded as a part of *the witnesses*, it will probably be objected, that numbers have acted, in the course of it, with extreme injustice and the most wanton cruelty. It may be replied, that the hypothesis which is supported in the present chapter requires not, that such persons should be classed among them. On the other hand, it cannot be denied by any impartial person, that, of those who commenced the French Revolution, and of those who have risen up to conduct or to defend it, *a large proportion* have in an extraordinary degree been distinguished by courage and firmness, by disinterestedness, public spirit, and the most ardent zeal in behalf of the best interests of mankind; and it may with reason be maintained, that they are worthy of being numbered among *the witnesses*, and ranked among the honorable opposers of Civil and Ecclesiastical tyranny. But though all the inhabitants of France certainly deserve not the title of *the witnesses*, they may *all* be employed by the Supreme Being to execute his beneficent purposes. \* What,' says a recently cited writer, 'was Henry the eighth, who began our reformation? A monster! What

were his motives? The gratification of his lusts.—Are established systems of superstition and tyranny to be overthrown by a few smooth words of benevolence and wisdom? Happy if they could! Are *the Dragon* and *the Beasts*, which have so depopulated the earth for ages, to perish without convulsion? Read, *they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink, for they are worthy*<sup>48</sup>. When this period shall arrive, there will be much work to do, for the execution of which the meek of the earth are by no means qualified<sup>49</sup>.’ The same writer, with a reference to France, says in another place, ‘though, as was the case with the Assyrians and with Cyrus, the instruments which he uses, may not *know* him, nor *mean* to fulfil his will, yet they may be *the rod* of his *anger* to accomplish his councils<sup>50</sup>.’ In this point of view, men may be called *the Servants of God*, though stained with numerous vices. ‘God,’ says Mr. Lowth, ‘calls Nebuchadnezzar *his Servant*, Jer. xxv. 9, and Cyrus *his anointed*, Isa. xlv. 1, because they were ordained and set apart by God to be the executioners of his judgments upon those nations, whom he had marked out for destruction<sup>51</sup>.’

The powerful and prosperous state, to which the witnesses are to attain, the passages already examined, unequivocally declare. But it is in two preceding verses, that their formidable power, when they are unjustly attacked by their enemies, is most strongly expressed, though indeed darkly and figuratively. *And if any man will hurt them*<sup>52</sup>, *fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth*

48 Rev. xvi. 6.

49 Signs of the Times, p. 6.

50 P. 43. Of the passages referred to above the following is the principal. *O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, and the staff in their hand is mine indignation. I will send him against an hypocritical nation, and against the people of my wrath will I give him charge.—Howbeit he meaneth not so, neither doth his heart think so: but it is in his heart to destroy and cut off nations not a few.* Is. x. 5, 6, 7.

51 On Is. xiii. 3.

52 *Εἰ τις αὐτοὺς θέλη ἀδικῆσαι*, that is, as rendered by Daubuz, ‘if any man will wrong them,’ or rather, if any man design to wrong them.



*their enemies: and if any man will hurt them*<sup>53</sup>, *he must in this manner be killed. These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will.* To any period, prior to their symbolic resurrection, this account is plainly inapplicable: and accordingly Mede remarks, that it is to be referred, not to the whole of the 1260 years, but to the conclusion of it, when the Christian world is to be emancipated from the tyranny of the beast<sup>54</sup>. That *fire* is the symbol of destruction, and particularly of destruction by war, the doctors More and Lancaster observe, and on this point appeal to Achmet and to the Hebrew prophets. Accordingly Daubuz, in explaining this passage relative to *the witnesses*, says, it ‘signifies that God will certainly revenge their cause by punishing and consuming their enemies.’ To the same purpose St. John (ix. 17), in another description, which relates to the Ottomans, says, *and out of their mouths issued fire*, i. e. destruction. Now ‘*the mouth*,’ says Dr. Lancaster, ‘signifies the words that proceed out of it, which, in the sacred style, are the same as commands and *actions*, because they imply the effects of the thoughts<sup>55</sup>.’ Daubuz also, in explaining v. 18, ch. ix. where *fire* is spoken of as proceeding from their mouths, says *the mouth* may signify any of those *means*, which men employ to execute their designs. When therefore St. John assures us respecting the witnesses, in the spirit of prophecy, that *fire proceedeth out of their mouths, and devoureth their enemies*, his meaning appears to be, that the destruction of their enemies<sup>56</sup> in war will result from the measures which *the witnesses* shall employ.

53 ‘This repetition implies the certainty of God’s judgments upon the enemies of these witnesses.’ Daubuz.

54 P. 599.

55 ‘Thus the word of God, or the word that proceeds out of his mouth, signifies sometimes the actions of God’s providence.’ Lancaster.

56 And who are the enemies of the independence and liberties of France? Not NATIONS, but certain INDIVIDUALS.

*These have power to shut the symbolic heaven that it rain not*<sup>57</sup>. To the province of government their influence powerfully extends. But what is the meaning of their preventing the figurative *rain* from falling in this symbolic heaven? ‘The oneirocritics,’ says Daubuz on this verse, ‘have explained the symbol of *rain* or *dew*, of all manner of good things.’ And does not the prophecy, according to this explication of it, perfectly accord with fact? Has not that shower ‘of all manner of good things,’ which formerly fell in the symbolic heaven of *the Tenth Part of the city*, completely ceased? Since the people have taken the government into their own hands, has not the stream of preferments and revenues been dried up, which formerly was wont so profusely to flow into the hands of the courtiers, the ecclesiastics, and the principal nobility? They *have also power over waters to turn them to blood*, i. e. says Mr. Waple, to embroil nations in war. That *waters* signify nations is indeed certain<sup>58</sup>; and that *blood* has a reference to war and slaughter is equally plain. Perhaps the witnesses who inhabit *the Tenth Part of the city* may be said to do this, because they are the occasion of its being done; or it may perhaps be the necessary result of the best mode of defending themselves, and of perpetuating their liberties. *And have power to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will*. Now *the earth*, as has before been observed, and as Mr. Waple remarks on this passage in particular, is ‘the worldly and antichristian part of it.’

The anonymous author, who about the middle of the present century wrote a *Dissertation* to prove France to be *the Tenth Part of the symbolic city*, after observing, that there will be ‘effects big with destruction to every Secular Power, that attempts the extirpation of the witnesses;’ says, there is extraordinary ‘power assigned the witnesses

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57 It is plain, says Daubuz, ‘that this is meant of another kind of calamity, besides that of natural drought,—the words being to be taken symbolically.’

58 On this symbol see note 22 in p. 48.

in the eleventh chapter; nothing of which has yet been observed to turn up in their history, that I know of; and therefore is most probably reserved for the times of this GRAND REVOLUTION<sup>59</sup>.' And he appeals, in proof of this, to those two very remarkable verses, of which an illustration has just been attempted.

Should it be conceded, that the French as *a nation* are in an eminent degree criminal, which I certainly am not disposed to grant, still it will not therefore follow, that their efforts may not, for a very considerable period of time, be attended with signal success. 'That the wicked are always punished for their crimes in this world, is a doctrine contradicted by revelation, and the testimony of all ages. Providence is always equitable and just, but our views of it are too limited and partial, to enable us to reason justly concerning the methods of its procedure. Sacred and profane history afford many instances of rude and barbarous nations, being raised up by the Almighty, to serve as a scourge in his hand for chastising others, who, having been favoured with the knowledge of the true God and the advantages of revealed religion, had abused these privileges by vicious and immoral practices. The Israelites were often subdued, and their kingdom at last brought to ruin, by their idolatrous neighbours. And when the Christian church was mostly confined within the bounds of the Roman empire, that large and mighty body, which for ages had been strong as iron, was at last overwhelmed and broken in pieces, by a people nursed in savage manners and brutal ignorance<sup>60</sup>.'

The contents of this and the two preceding chapters being too bulky for recapitulation, I shall conclude the subject, by recalling the reader to a very few points upon which the whole matter turns. Since we have not only seen, that the witnesses are those *who bear testimony to the truth against errors and corruptions*; but have moreover

59 P. 26.

60 Miln's Disc. ut supra, p. 24.

collected from those whose authority stands highest upon the subject, that the death (v. 7) and the resurrection (v. 11) of the witnesses, that their hearing of a great voice from heaven (v. 12), that their ascent to heaven (v. 12), and that the great earthquake which was to take place in the Tenth Part of the city (v. 13), are all decidedly political symbols; it appears absolutely necessary to interpret the prophecy as applying to some *political* event. Not to mention that *the time*, when the French Revolution happened, perfectly agrees with all the intimations, which St. John has afforded us relative to the period of its fulfilment; not to mention that France was the country which arose out of the ruins of the Roman Western empire the Tenth in order; not to mention that it has a well-founded claim to distinction, from its extent, importance, and the greatness of the sufferings both of a religious and a political nature which its inhabitants have endured; it may safely be asked, if the prophecy must be politically interpreted, where is the country in Europe, excepting France, to which we can turn our eye, in order to discover the occurrences which correspond to it; and particularly the abolition of titles which is predicted, the overthrow of ecclesiastical usurpation which is plainly included, and the invitation which it is foretold should be given to men to assume a share in the government?

I shall only add, that those persons, who shall still conceive, notwithstanding all which has been advanced, that the prophetic narrative of the witnesses is incapable of being applied at all to those, who have recently stood forward against civil and against spiritual despotism in France, are not obliged on that account to conclude, that the prediction of the symbolic earthquake in the 13th v.<sup>61</sup> which follows the account of the witnesses, received not its fulfilment in the events of the French Revolution. For it

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61 To illustrate this and the two verses most closely connected with it (v. 11, 12), has been my principal care; whilst it has been deemed sufficient *incidentally* to remark on the eight antecedent verses.



may be plausibly argued, as Vitringa and other commentators have shewn, that the latter most striking verse was not to be accomplished at the same time with most of the former verses, but by different persons and at a different period.

Probably some of my readers may expect, that, before I terminate this chapter, I should notice the exact correspondency of 666, the number of one of the Beasts described in ch. xiii. to LUDOVICUS, the ordinary name of the French Kings<sup>62</sup>. Now those who admit the number 666 to denote the name of Ludovicus, must, I conceive, of course apply it to *the Secular Beast*, who is first mentioned in that chapter, and, of the two, sustains the *most* important character. That masterly expositor, Daubuz, does indeed lay it down as a remark of general application, ‘that when the Holy Ghost mentions *the Beast* by itself, it is to be understood of *that great Beast* with seven heads and ten horns, that is, *the Secular Powers* within the precincts of the corrupted

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62 - - - - -	L	-	-	50
	V	-	-	5
	D	-	-	500
	O	-	-	0
	V	-	-	5
	I	-	-	1
	C	-	-	100
	V	-	-	5
	S	-	-	0

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666

O and S are not numeral letters, and therefore of course not taken into the account. ‘It may be asked,’ says Mr. Bicheno, ‘why is the Latin language referred to rather than either the Hebrew, the Greek, or French? For these reasons. At the time this prediction was given, the Latin was the most general language in the Roman empire; and after the empire was divided, it became the universal language in the Western part, where the scene of St. John’s vision chiefly lay. It is also the language used in all the services of that church which this Beast was to support; and thus the names of the French kings have been written in their communications to the pope, in public inscriptions, and on coins.’ Signs of the Times, 2d. ed. p. 31.

church; not *the less* beast with two horns, which is described and said to be *the False Prophet*<sup>63</sup>.' -

The words of St. John, which I am now to cite, constitute the conclusion of the xiiiith chapter, a chapter appropriated to the delineation of these two symbolic Beasts. *Here is Wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the Beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is six hundred three score and six.* 'It is not,' says bp. Newton, 'a vain and ridiculous attempt, to search into this mystery, but on the contrary is recommended to us upon the authority of an apostle.—It was a method practised among the ancients to denote names by numbers;' and 'it hath been the usual method in all God's dispensations for the holy Spirit to accommodate his expressions to the customs, fashions, and manners of the several ages<sup>64</sup>.'

'It has been observed,' says Dr. Gill in his Exposition, 'that the numeral letters in Ludovicus or Lewis, which is a common name of the French king, and is the name of the present French king, make up this same number; and may denote the destruction of Antichrist, which will quickly follow THE DOWNFALL OF THE KINGDOM OF FRANCE under a king of this name; and the rather since this was the last of the Ten Kingdoms that was set up, and in which the primitive Beast subsists, and the only one that has not yet been conquered, or in which a REVOLUTION has not been made; and since this is *the Tenth Part of the city*, which shall *fall* a little before the third woe comes on<sup>65</sup>. The earliest commentator, whom I have myself consulted, who notices the agreement of Ludovicus with 666, is Vitranga, the second edition of whose Commentary on the Apocalypse was printed in 1719. For the grounds of this application of the prophecy he refers the reader to the el-

63 P. 704.

64 Vol. III. p. 231.

65 Vol. V. p. 584, 4to. That a Revolution in France was foretold in the xith ch. the doctor, in a former part of his Expos. (p. 553), more directly states.

borate performance of an anonymous writer, whom he stiles most learned. This mode of calculating *the number of the Beast* occurs also in Wolfius, in his *Curæ Philologicæ et Criticæ*, printed in 1741 ; and in the *Gnomon Novi Testamenti* of Bengelius, which was published in the succeeding year. On this point Wolfius refers the reader to Kleschius, who has probably treated fully upon it, and whose sentiments I apprehend to have been published in 1705. Kleschius, in corroboration of what he advanced, had also pointed out another striking coincidence. Three Lilies are the established symbol of the French monarch ; and שושנים, which in Hebrew signifies Lilies, does amount, with perfect exactness, to the number 666<sup>66</sup>.

But notwithstanding that this method of explaining *the number of the Beast* was noticed so long ago by KLESCHIUS and WOLFIUS, by BENGELIUS and VITRINGA ; and notwithstanding that recent events, and particularly the execution of the late king, have stamped upon the interpretation an additional degree of credibility ; yet, I confess, neither this, nor any other mode of calculating this number, which I have seen, carries conviction to my mind.

Those, however, who conclude *Ludovicus* to be intended, will, I apprehend, take the strongest ground, if they argue thus. By embracing this opinion, we do not contend, that the Beast is exclusively to be understood of the French Kings. In the general description of the ten-horned Beast, the conduct of the other horns is doubtless alluded to. But as the witnesses against antichristian abuses, who have appeared from time to time in France, are particularly distinguished for their numbers, their perseverance, and the

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66 - - - - -	<i>Shin</i> stands for	300
	<i>Van</i>	6
	<i>Shin</i>	300
	<i>Nun</i>	50
	<i>Jod</i>	10
		<hr/>
		666

From the computation *Mem* final is excluded, being no numeral.

great evils they have suffered; and are deservedly selected in the xith chapter to be as it were specimens of other witnesses, who have been scattered in other countries, more sparingly, and at longer intervals of time: so in like manner, the *Ludovici*, who have persecuted them, are more remarkable than any other Horn of the European Beast for their power, their cruelty<sup>67</sup>, and their number; and therefore they are, with propriety, chosen as apt representatives of the whole tribe of antichristian monarchs who are established in Europe. If Antiochus in Daniel, as the protestant commentators unite to maintain, be typical of the Roman pontiffs in general; may not the succession of the *Ludovici* be alluded to with a degree of appositeness not inferior, as affording a genuine sample of the ordinary conduct, observed by the sceptered tyrants of modern Europe? We are expressly told, that *it is the number of a man*. Now in what territory of the European world, it may be asked, or in what period of modern history, for in these respects our inquiry is limited, shall we find any man, who has exercised tyranny, in a more pernicious and execrable manner, than Louis XI. and Louis XIV.<sup>68</sup>? But *the name of the Beast* may be conceived to refer not so much to any one or two men in particular, as to the French monarchs in gene-

67 'There is no royal family in Europe which has shed, in the support of popery, half the blood which the Capets have.' *Signs of the Times*, by Mr. Bicheno, p. 28. 'Who,' says he (p. 11), have been 'such enemies to the truth of God and the happiness of mankind? Their tyranny has been the scourge of France, of Europe, and the world.'

68 France he impoverished by profusion; Europe he embroiled in perpetual war. This, an evil dreadful at all times, was by him conducted with unaccustomed barbarity. Twice did he cause the Palatinate to be laid waste with fire and sword. From the battlements of his castle at Mannheim, as Voltaire informs us, the elector Palatine could behold two cities and twenty-five villages in flames. Multitudes of either sex and of every age fled with precipitancy, amid the severity of winter, either wandering about in the fields destitute of food, or taking shelter in the neighboring countries. He it was who caused the most exquisite tortures to be inflicted on many of the protestants; and, by the revocation of the edict of Nantes, drove 800,000 of them out of France. But to recount the enormities of Louis XIV. would require a volume of the amplest size.



ral; and it may be remarked, that *the founder* of the French monarchy<sup>69</sup> and its attendant hierarchy was called Clovis,

69 It perhaps is not generally known, that, in the reign of Clotaire, son of Clovis, the territories of the French monarchy were far more extensive than those of modern France. See the Dissertation of M. de Fonce-magné, in the *Memoires de l'Academie des Inscriptions*, tom. VIII. p. 506—528. About the year 532, this monarchy was established in its greatest extent, and so as to bid defiance to hostile attack; for, in this year, the extensive dominions of the rival kingdom of the Burgundians were annexed by conquest to those of the Franks, and four years afterwards the independence and legal authority of the monarchy they had erected were acknowledged by Justinian, and a friendly treaty was concluded between that powerful emperor and the victorious sons of Clovis. See Gibbon's *Decl. and Fall of the R. E.* vol. VI. p. 324, 339. Possibly it may be thought remarkable by some, that exactly 1260 years intervene between the year 532, the æra of the aggrandisement and firm establishment of the French monarchy, and the year 1792, the æra of its complete, and, as many are inclined to believe, final, subversion. And some perhaps will be disposed to add, that this monarchy was as much distinguished by the rapidity of its rise, as it has been remarkable for the suddenness of its fall. The narrow limits of the kingdom of Clovis, when he ascended the throne of his father, were, says Mr. Gibbon, 'confined to the island of the Batavians, with the ancient dioceses of Tournay and Arras; and at the baptism of Clovis, the number of his warriors could not exceed five thousand. —When he first took the field, he had neither gold nor silver in his coffers, nor wine and corn in his magazines,' vol. VI. p. 310. Yet this prince, at the time of his death, and he died at the age of 45, reigned over territories of vast extent, and was the conqueror of the Goths, the Alemanni, and the Burgundians.

There is nothing in the character and conduct of the first of the Ludovici, who in several respects resembles the emperor Constantine, which can exempt him from the ignominy of being placed at the head of a long line of antichristian princes, the abettors of civil and ecclesiastical tyranny. 'His ambitious reign,' says the author of the history of the Decline and Fall of the Roman empire, 'was a perpetual violation of moral and Christian duties; his hands were stained with blood, in peace as well as in war; and, as soon as Clovis had dismissed a synod of the Gallican church, he calmly assassinated all the princes of the Merovingian race,' vol. VI. p. 320. But he was a champion of orthodoxy and a liberal benefactor of the clergy; and these traits of character, in the opinion of some bigots, are capable of washing away every sin. Clovis, says Baronius, was *rex gloriose memorie* and *religiosissimus princeps*; and the cardinal declares, that he defeated the Alemanni by the assistance of Christ, and that the

Louis, or Ludovicus, and that these words, differently as they sound, are only variations of the same name<sup>70</sup>.

Of what is ascribed in ch. xiii. to the Ten Horns in general, may not much be applied, with the utmost exactness, to the Gallic horn in particular? Have not his subjects, in a peculiar manner, *worshipped*<sup>71</sup> this most distinguished of the Ten Horns, by bending to him with the most servile homage? Have they not exclaimed as with one voice, and particularly the panegyrists of Louis XIV. *who is like unto him, who is able to make war with him?* Did he not assume a loftier tone than ordinary, and *open his mouth in blasphemy against God?* Was not power given *unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them?* And does not the fate of the last prince<sup>72</sup>, who bore this name, correspond with the memorable words of the prophet? Was he not *led into captivity, and afterwards killed with the sword?*

vial of oil, with which he was anointed at the epoch of his baptism and in the cathedral of Rheims, was brought from heaven in the mouth of a dove.

70 This is proved in the *Memoirs de l'Academie des Inscriptions* (tom. XX. p. 68). Accordingly Mezeray thus commences his historic account of the founder of the French monarchy, *Clovis ou Louis, car c'est le mesme nom, &c.*

71 See ch. xiii. v. 4—10.

72 'There seems,' says an explainer of the Apocalypse, 'to be a particular denunciation against the family of Bourbon in the second Command, where God threatens to punish idolaters even to the *Third* and *Fourth* generation. This was at first threatened against *apostate* Israelites, who had the advantage of being instructed in the true religion. And if we shall read the history of the idolatrous kings of Israel and Judah, we shall find this threatening never failed to be executed.—Now it is very observable, that the present king of France is the third from Henry the 4th, who was a protestant, and changed his religion, for no other reason, but that thereby he might establish himself and his posterity upon the throne of France.' Taylor's *Ess. on Some Important Parts of the Rev.* 1770, p. 144.

## CHAPTER X.

ON THE CONCLUSION OF THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER OF THE  
APOCALYPSE.

HAVING remarked on several parts of the xith chapter, I shall briefly notice its conclusion: having hitherto confined the attention of the reader principally to France, I shall lead him to take a view of the general tenor of the events, which are likely to happen in some surrounding countries, or throughout the whole of Europe: having expatiated on a prediction, which is regarded as applicable to the French revolution, I shall touch on some collateral topics; and, through much of the remainder of the work, shall consider some both of the more near and more distant consequences, which may probably result from that revolution, or be promoted by it.

The close of the xith chapter contains a brief account of the seventh trumpet. With respect to the seven trumpets in general, it is observed by Mede and Vitringa, that they denounce that succession of judgments by which the Roman Empire was to be destroyed<sup>1</sup>. Now the reader is to remember what has already been remarked, that the Roman empire, in the view of prophecy, ‘for the convenience of the prophetic calculations, is considered as subsisting, though in a new form, under the Ten Kings, among whom it was to be divided<sup>2</sup>.’ Thus the four first trumpets were fulfilled in the time of the Roman emperors; whilst the three last, which are likewise called *woes*, belong to that empire, in its present form, as parcelled out into a number of separate and independent states.

On the two first woes a few extracts shall be given. As the prophetic description of them run to a considerable

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1 See Vitringa, p. 236.

2 Hurd, vol. II. p. 191.

length, and as they are both fulfilled, it is to be expected, that, in the application of them, there should be little disagreement among the commentators. Accordingly we have their general testimony to assure us, that the Saracens were *the first woe*. This was conceived to be undoubted by Sir I. Newton, by Mede and More, by bishops Newton and Hallifax, by Pyle, Whiston, and Jurieu, by Goodwin, Waple, and Fleming, by Cressener, Lowman, and Daubuz. In the account of this woe, which occupies the eleven first verses of ch. ix, one symbol occurs, so curious and so appropriate, as to induce me to take particular notice of it. The Saracens, in the figurative language of the prophet, are denominated *locusts*. ‘Locusts,’ says Dr. Lancaster<sup>3</sup>, ‘fly in such prodigious numbers, as that they form a great cloud and darken the sky, and then falling upon the earth, make a most terrible havoc of all the fruits thereof; and so are a proper symbol to signify an army of enemies coming in vast multitudes to make an excursion, in order to plunder and destroy a country: and therefore very properly represent here the Arabians or Saracens, who were always professed robbers, and made prodigious incursions upon the Roman empire particularly, as well as towards the Indies: making, wherever they came, most furious depredations.’ It is said in v. 9, that *the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle*; ‘and Pliny affirms, that they fly with so great a noise of their wings, that they may be taken for birds. Their *wings*, and *the sound of their wings*, denote the swiftness,’ with which the Arabians atchieved their conquests<sup>4</sup>. ‘To shew their great rapidity,’ says Dr. Lancaster, ‘it will be sufficient to observe, that in the reign of Omar, the second caliph after Mahomet, these locusts had made such a surprising progress, (though his reign was only about ten years and an half) that they became masters of 36,000 towns, villages, and castles, in Syria, Chaldea, Mesopota-

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3 In his Abridgment of Daubuz.

4 Bp. Newton.



‘*nia, Persia, and Egypt; and carried on their conquests as far as Tripoli of Barbary. And this is observed by Khondemir<sup>5</sup>.*’ In v. 5, it is declared, that men should be tormented by them *five months*; and again in v. 10, that *their power was not to hurt men five months*. This, says bishop Newton, ‘is said without doubt in conformity to the type; for locusts are observed to live about *five months*, that is from April to September:’ and, in proof of this, the prelate appeals to Bochart and to Pliny. Now, says the bp. of Bristol, ‘if these months be taken for prophetic months or 150 years, it was within that space of time that the Saracens made their principal conquests. Their empire might subsist much longer, but their power of *hurting* and *tormenting men* was exerted chiefly within that period. Read the history of the Saracens, and you will find that their greatest exploits were performed, their greatest conquests were made, between the year 612, when Mohammed—began publicly to teach and propagate his imposture, and the year 762, when the caliph Almansor built Bagdad, to fix there the seat of his empire, and called it *the City of Peace*. Syria, Persia, India, and the greatest part of Asia; Egypt and the greatest part of Africa; Spain and some parts of Europe, were all subdued in the intermediate time. But when the caliphs, who before had removed from place to place, fixed their habitation at Bagdad, then the Saracens ceased from their incursions and ravages like locusts, and became a settled nation; then they made no more such rapid and amazing conquests as before, but only engaged in common and ordinary wars like other nations; then their power and glory began to decline, and their empire by little and little to moulder away.’

The second woe<sup>6</sup> consisted of the wars and conquests of the Turks and Ottomans, which have fallen with so severe a weight on the corrupt inhabitants of Christendom<sup>7</sup>. This

<sup>5</sup> Herbelot, tit. Omar.

<sup>6</sup> It is described in ch. ix. v. 11—21.

<sup>7</sup> To be convinced that it is a *woe* with a reference to them, it will be sufficient to inspect it. After describing it, St. John says (v. 20, 21), *And the rest of the men, which were not killed by these plagues, yet repented not*

is the general opinion of commentators; the opinion of *all* those whom I have named as harmonising in their explication of the first woe. But I shall quote only from one of them, and from his abbreviator, Dr. Lancaster. *Four angels*, the messengers of the divine wrath, are represented as being *bound in the great river Euphrates*, and afterwards *loosed*, that they might *slay the third part of men*. The *four angels*, says Daubuz, are the Ottomans, and particularly refer to Ortogrul the third, with his three sons, Condoz, Sarubani, and Othman, who first passed the Euphrates, and laid the foundation of the mighty power of the Ottomans. The beginnings of that power were, observes this learned writer, ‘no less wonderful than those of the Saracens.’ ‘By their being *loosed*,’ I am now quoting from Dr. Lancaster, ‘they were permitted to break into Christendom by their passing *the Euphrates*. And therefore the part of Christendom, which was to suffer by them, must be that which lay next to that barrier, being as it were guarded by it. The Eastern empire therefore is here intended, which both had the name, and kept up the pretensions, of the ancient Roman empire, which was the third part of the known world, wherein the Christian religion was planted. And in this empire, which was the third or chief part of Christendom, were *the men* to be *slain*; that is, deprived of their political life and government.—Accordingly this event was brought about by Mahomet II. who by taking Constantinople, A. D. 1453, and by his

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*of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood:—neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication nor of their thefts.* ‘Notwithstanding that dreadful woe, afflicting the Eastern Christians,’ which the prophet here describes, ‘yet,’ says Daubuz, ‘the Western did still continue in their idolatry, and took no notice of those dreadful warnings of God,’ *Τα δαιμόνια*, the word translated *devils*, Dr. More observes, is to be ‘understood of giving religious worship to dæmons, that is to say, to the souls of men deceased.’ *Myst. of Iniq.* p. 339. See this proved at large in Mede, p. 783. It is to be remembered, that the worship of images, at the period of the Ottoman conquests, was every where prevalent.

conquest of the empire of Trebizond, A. D. 1460 ruined all the power of the Eastern empire, in all the parts thereof, and this so effectually, that not one monarchy of those Christian princes which formerly possessed it was excepted from this common disaster; the Ottomans having gained, and still enjoying, all the dominions of the Eastern Cæsars.'

In order to apply the symbols of the first and second woe to the several events and particulars which they were designed to predict, it is obvious, that an exact acquaintance with history is indispensably necessary. Some observations of bp. Hurd may be here pertinently alleged. 'That the argument from Prophecies should not convince those, who have not considered the occasion and design of them, the purposes they were intended to serve, and therefore the degree of light and clearness, with which it was proper they should be given; who have not studied the language in which these prophecies are conveyed, the state of the times in which they were delivered, the manners, the customs, the opinions of those to whom they were addressed; above all, who have not taken the pains to acquire a very exact and extensive knowlege of history, and so are not qualified to judge how far they have been accomplished; that to such persons as these, I say, the argument from prophecy should not appear to have all that evidence which believers ascribe to it, is very likely; but then this effect is to be accounted for, not from their knowlege, but their ignorance, not from their *seeing too clearly*, but from their *not seeing at all*, or but imperfectly, into the merits of this argument. And for those who have searched deepest, and inquired with most care, into this kind of evidence, they depose unanimously in its favor, and profess themselves to have received conviction from it<sup>8</sup>.'

Whilst in v. 13 of ch. xi. it is foretold, that there would be a Revolution in *the Tenth Part of the city*, and an abolition of names or titles; it is solemnly proclaimed in the following verse, *that the second woe is past; and, behold,*

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8 Serm. preached at Lincoln's Inn, vol. II. p. 74.

*the third woe cometh quickly.* In the three following verses the prophet touches on the happy changes which shall arise in consequence of that third woe, or the sounding of the seventh trumpet; and in v. 18 it is added, that when the *wrath of God is come*, he will *destroy them which destroy the earth*. Now those, who reflect that a Great Earthquake, to use the word in its figurative import, has recently shaken the European continent, and who believe that titles have already been abolished in *the Tenth Part of the symbolic city*, will be naturally solicitous to inquire, what are the subsequent events, which are to be accomplished during the last of the woes and of the trumpets, and to what class of persons those belong, whom the unerring voice of prophecy has denounced as the destroyers of the earth.

To those who are actuated by this solicitude I observe, that as each of the six preceding trumpets foretold a mighty war<sup>9</sup>, which was to be followed by some important event; so also does *the seventh*; and to their attention I recommend the observations of the following commentators, on *the effect* which is to be produced by this most memorable of the trumpets. The events it foretells, they unite in asserting, belong to the Western part of the Roman empire, or the dominions of the ten-horned Beast. ‘The third woe,’ says bp. Newton, ‘is the ruin and downfall of the antichristian kingdom.’ It does, says Mede, destroy the kingdom of the Beast<sup>10</sup>. ‘The sole object of the third woe,’ declares Dr. Cressener, ‘is the party of the Beast; and it ends with the ruin of that party<sup>11</sup>.’ That it brings on the total ruin of the Antichristian power, is the statement of Mr. Pyle. The object of the third woe or seventh trumpet, says Mr. Durham, is ‘the executing of God’s vengeance upon Antichrist and the kingdom of the Beast; the destroying of them that formerly destroyed the earth.’

9 Employed in the field of battle, and in the proclamation of war, the trumpet is a natural emblem of the latter.

10 P. 587, 591.

11 Judgm. on the Rom. Ch. p. 245.



‘The seventh trumpet,’ says Daubuz, ‘is to have a mixture of woe for the corrupted Christians, and joy to the just, who are to be retrieved from that tyranny they have groaned under.’ It ‘will contain a Great Revolution, with amazing circumstances of suddenness and terror<sup>12</sup>.’ But to multiply citations is needless. This is not a matter that rests upon the opinion of commentators. No attentive reader can peruse the account of the seventh trumpet, without perceiving that this *is* the period, in which all despotic rule shall be abolished.

What words can be plainer and more decisive than those of the introductory verse : *and the seventh angel sounded : and there were great voices in heaven, saying, the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ ?* What language can be more expressive than that of the 18th verse already cited ; that God will *destroy them which destroy the earth ?*

Let it not be supposed, that I am chargeable with inconsistency, because I here understand the word *earth* in its plain and literal sense, whilst elsewhere I have generally annexed to it a symbolic signification. That there is ‘*a mixed use of the plain and figured style*’ in the prophecies of Holy Writ, bp. Hurd observes<sup>13</sup>; and the observation admits not of dispute.

But though the seventh trumpet is undoubtedly to be levelled against the Gentile and antichristian part of mankind ; though it is to bring ruin on the heads of those, who stand up to defend the different systems of tyranny ; though its result will be assuredly joyful and beneficial to mankind, far beyond what language can express ; yet, as it includes in it at least one hard-contested war, it is perhaps to be feared, that the evils inseparable from it may reach all descriptions of persons. Some passages of prophecy might indeed be alleged, which appear to countenance this gloomy idea.

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12 P. 451, 543.

13. Vol. II. p. 102.

The name of *woes*, says Sir I. Newton, 'is given to the wars to which the three last trumpets sound, to distinguish them from the wars of the four first'<sup>14</sup>. But whether *the third woe* points to one great and eventful war, or to a succession of wars, it is not now perhaps possible to ascertain.

With respect to the persons who are to inflict *the third woe* upon the antichristian part of the European world, I shall quote from Dr. Cressener, one of the many writers who declared it to be his opinion that France was the country, where the symbolic resurrection of the witnesses would probably take place. 'It is,' he says, 'to be concluded, that the executors of the third woe are the risen witnesses, and that they are altogether the agents in it.' 'Indeed,' says he, 'the particular reason of interposing the account of *the death and resurrection* of the witnesses before the end of the second woe, seems evidently to be to show what enemy it was that should be the third woe, and who should be the objects of it'<sup>15</sup>.

One principal design of the xith chapter, says Dr. Goodwin, is to give 'the immediate tokens or signals that shall fore-run the ending of' the times of the Beast<sup>16</sup>. And he elsewhere says, 'in this their resurrection, there is a fore-running shadow of that last great victory, which brings in the kingdom of Christ,—for the Thousand Years. Of the glorious beginning whereof, under the seventh trumpet ensuing, v. 15, this is ordained to be the dawning'<sup>17</sup>. That by writers of all ages the symbolic resurrection of the witnesses has been viewed in this light, he indeed declares<sup>18</sup>; and a little farther observes, 'that the true reason, why this particular occurrence, though falling out but in a tenth part of Europe, is here made mention of rather than any other,' is on account of its peculiar fitness to presignify what is destined to follow. *The resurrection*

14 P. 295.

15 Judgm. on the Rom. Ch. p. 142, 143.

16 P. 108.

17 P. 169.

18 P. 179

of the witnesses, says Mr. Haughton, is a sign, 'that Antichrist's utter ruin is near, even at the door'<sup>19</sup>.

When it is said in v. 14, that *the second woe is past; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly*; the meaning appears to be this: the career of the Turkish victories is now arrested, to their invasions a bar is set, and experiencing a sensible declension of power, no longer are they a scourge to the Christian world, this woe is passed by<sup>20</sup>; and, behold, the Revolution in the Tenth Part of the city having been accomplished, another memorable period ensues, denominated *the third woe*.

A remarkable clause of the 18th verse has been twice quoted. The whole of it is important. It needs elucidation, and the whole shall be cited. *And the nations were angry: and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead that they should be judged [or rather vindicated]; and that thou shouldst give reward to thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and to them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldst destroy them which destroy the earth.* That this verse cannot possibly refer to the Day of Judgment may be seen in any of the best commentators, and is undeniably proved by Vitringa.

*The nations*, or as I think it ought rather to be rendered, *the Gentiles*<sup>21</sup> *were angry*. The Gentile part of mankind, the advocates of abuses and antichristianism, were offended at the Revolution which happened in *the Tenth Part of*

19 On Antichrist, p. 125.

20 Dr. Cressener long ago observed, that he did not apprehend it to be 'necessary, that the end of the second woe should be the utter ruin of the Turkish empire.' 'For,' says he, 'I see that the Saracens, who were unquestionably the first woe, are said to be passed away, as they were the first woe, long before the end of the Saracen empire, that is, at the time when they ceased to be any longer a torment and vexation to the Roman empire,' which was near 200 years before the last end of their own empire.' *Judg. on the Rom. Ch.* p. 132. See similar observations in the more early commentators of the no less learned writers, Brightman and More.

21 Often is *τα εθνη* thus rendered in our English Translation, as for instance in v. 2 of this ch. and as it is in this place by Brightman. Mede, on this verse, expressly styles them the *pseudochristiani*, p. 1113.

*the symbolic city*, and at the progress of knowlege, which portended a change in other countries. This anger of theirs, says Daubuz, ‘ imports resistance and war, to oppose the kingdom of God and his Christ.—But this anger or resistance, will prove their third woe or utter destruction.’ Whether those who are now angry at the French revolution be among *the Gentiles* here spoken of, and whether those who have kindled the war against France be in any respect alluded to, are points which I shall leave to the reader’s own judgment, that he may decide upon them for himself. A quotation or two on this subject I shall, however, allege. That which follows is from that diligent reader of commentators and of prophecy, Dr. Henry More, ‘ *And the nations were angry.* Which anger, according to the sense of ALL EXPOSITORS, is their anger and envy conceived at the *rising of the witnesses*<sup>22</sup>.’ In the opinion of Dr. Priestley, this prophecy is now fulfilling. Apprehending this to be *a sign of the times*, and one of the signals which indicate that the period of the seventh trumpet has recently commenced, this celebrated writer asks, ‘ when have we seen, or heard of, such anger and rage in nations, such violence in carrying on war, and such destruction of men, as at this very time? It is thought that the last campaign only has destroyed many more men than all the eight years of the American war, and probably more than the long war before it; and from the increased armaments of the belligerent powers, and their increasing animosity, it is probable that the approaching campaign will be more bloody than the last<sup>23</sup>.’ That the revolution in *the Tenth Part of the symbolic city* would be accompanied by a ‘ fierce war,’ a German divine, the author of an apocalyptic treatise, long ago observed<sup>24</sup>. By Peganus also a war was expected to result from it; and from Brenius’s observations on the passage I am considering, it appears he

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22 Answ. to Remarks, &c. 1684, 4to. p. 307.

23 Fast Sermon for Feb. 28, 1794, p. 10, 11.

24 *Clavis Apocalyptica*, published by Mr. Hartlib, 1651, p. 8.



thought it probable, that the rage of the Gentile-Christians on account of this revolution might stimulate them to the fatal war of Armageddon, predicted in the xvth ch. of St. John.

*And thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be vindicated*<sup>25</sup>. The expression, *the dead*, is susceptible either of a literal or a figurative interpretation. In the former case, it may signify, that the period of God's vengeance being at length arrived, he will vindicate the cause of those, who, during so many ages, have been slaughtered or oppressed at the instigation of the privileged orders: in the latter case, it may import, that God will vindicate the cause of those, who still remain politically *dead*, and *raise* them to a different condition. *The time* also is

25 The words which follow are from Grotius, as quoted and approved by Lowman. 'Κρίνειν judicare, sæpe est vindicare.' Grot. in loc. In confirmation of this remark, which occurs also in Brenius, I observe that κρίνειν which commonly signifies *to judge*, frequently signifies *to vindicate*; and is accordingly often rendered in the LXX by ἐκδικεῖν, of which the proper meaning is to vindicate or avenge. The clause above refers, says Daubuz, to Rev. ch. vi. v. 10, where those *slain for the testimony which they held*, are represented as *crying with a loud voice, How Long, O Lord, Holy and True, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell upon the earth*, i. e. on the antichristian part of mankind?

Vitringa, speaking of the verse upon which I am commenting, says *to vindicate* does appear to be the certain sense of κρίνω in this place; and in proof of this he cites, among other passages, Ps. lxxii. 4, where דָּן in the Hebrew, and κρίνω in the Septuagint. bear that signification. This will appear from an inspection of the verse, which, independently of the light it may throw on the meaning of κρίνω does itself deserve citation and reference. *He shall judge the poor of the people, he shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor*. Surely the word judge, which is the rendering of our English version, is not in unison with the other clauses of the verse; and, as it communicates to the English reader a false idea, *vindicate* should be substituted in its place. That the word in the original does here signify to vindicate or defend, is observed likewise by Simeon de Muis, by Munsterus, and by Vatablus. Ps. lxxii. says Dr. Aphthorp (vol. II. p. 142), 'evidently harmonises with those predictions, which describes Christianity in its most perfect state on earth.' That it has a reference to Christ's kingdom, says bp. Patrick, is unquestionable, as 'the Jews themselves acknowledge.'

come, that thou shouldst give reward to thy servants the prophets, and to the saints. Since *prophets*, according to the general signification of the word in modern language, will not exist at the period here spoken of; it is necessary to have recourse to another interpretation; an interpretation which the mind of the reader will probably anticipate. Whilst those styled *saints* may be supposed to denote good men in general and genuine Christians; the term *prophets* may be reasonably thought to bear a somewhat narrower import, and to signify such as in an eminent degree sustain the character of instructors of mankind and of witnesses against errors and corruptions. This is the æra, when the Supreme Being shall distribute to them, in particular, favors and *rewards*; and shall so alter the complexion of human affairs, that they shall not merely enjoy the blessings of life, unpersecuted and undisturbed, but shall obtain, from their fellow-citizens, an equitable, and consequently a liberal, share of estimation and regard. And the divine favors shall be extended to all who are of real worth; for the *small and great* is, ‘an expression,’ says Daubuz, ‘which implies universality.’ But before the world can be fitted for the residence of men of this character, another class of persons must first be *destroyed*, namely those *who destroy the earth*. To point out any language, lying in a compass equally narrow, more strongly descriptive of some among the tyrants of the European continent, would scarcely be possible. Struck with the force of the expression, a modern commentator of Scotland, when arrived at this verse, thus exclaims: ‘Alas! and is this the character of the celebrated heroes, who shine in the annals of empires and kingdoms, whose names are immortalised by the conquest of such, perhaps, as were weaker and less wicked than themselves! Alas! what are they all but *destroyers of the earth*, desolating countries, murdering the inhabitants, or miserably plundering them of all their properties<sup>26</sup>.’ ‘We are perfectly sure,’ says an ear-

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26 Kershaw, vol. II. p. 131.

lier Scotch commentator, Mr. Robertson, ‘ of the nature of the persons, that they are no other than the enemies of the witnesses.’ And of this verse it is observed by Mr. Waple, that it refers to what is called the great Battle of Armageddon<sup>27</sup>, in which the antichristian princes of the European world are to receive a decisive and dreadful overthrow.

One additional reflection shall conclude the observations on ch. xi. of St. John. It is in v. 13 we are told, that *there was a great Earthquake in the Tenth Part of the symbolic city*: it is in v. 15 we are assured, that *the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ*. The speediness with which the one is mentioned after the other naturally encourages the expectation, that the lesser Revolution will be preparatory to the greater, and that it will be followed by it at no *very* distant period of time. Accordingly Vitringa declares, that the Revolution, which would take place in the Tenth Part of the city, would *speedily* be followed by other more grievous judgments, which would bring on the final demolition of the antichristian empire<sup>28</sup>.

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## CHAPTER XI.

### ON THE VIALS IN GENERAL.

AFTER introducing so many observations on the fourth vial, and on the seventh trumpet: it is proper, that I should state my idea respecting the vials in general more explicitly than I have hitherto done. That some or all of them have an intimate connection with the third woe or the seventh trumpet, has I believe never been denied.

In the commencement of this work, Mr. Fleming’s explanation of the fourth vial has been brought forwards;

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<sup>27</sup> In Mede (p. 739) a similar observation occurs.

<sup>28</sup> P. 485.

and it has I think been proved (the only thing of which I undertook to allege a proof), that, *if that vial does relate to the Revolution in France*, it is prophetic of the overthrow of its monarchy, and *cannot* be interpreted so as to appear unfriendly to the interests of the French nation. If Mr. Fleming's interpretation of the fourth vial be solid, it will then follow, that we are now living under the fifth vial; and I should not do justice to Mr. Fleming, were I not to observe, that this perfectly agrees with the statement of a learned and uncommonly industrious examiner of the Apocalypse. That the third woe is commenced appears from the 13th and 14th v. of ch. xi; and Dr. Cressener regards it as certain, that the fifth, sixth, and seventh vials constitute it, and consequently, that the beginning of the plague of 'the fifth vial is the beginning of the third woe'.

But I should not act an open and ingenious part, were I not to declare, that I am now of opinion, that the pouring out of the vials was to be subsequent to *the Earthquake in the Tenth Part of the city*, and that the vials' are only *beginning* to be fulfilled; an opinion respecting which I had come to no decision, when composing the two first chapters of the work. If this be admitted, it follows of consequence, that the French revolution is *not* foretold by the symbols of the fourth vial, and that any arguments which have been or can be produced in favor of that opinion are inconclusive. Such a prediction, it must indeed be confessed, does not seem wanting, because v. 13 of ch. xi. may be justly thought prophetic of the revolution in France, and is, of itself, amply sufficient. I have, however, been induced to print the two first chapters of the work, partly because they were the foundation of it, partly because they contain observations susceptible of general application, and partly on account of the reasons, alleged in the preface to the present performance, which prompted me to commence it, and *first* occasioned me to turn my mind to prophetic inquiries. Though firmly persuaded, that the fourth vial



could not possibly be interpreted in a manner favorable to the enemies of the French revolution, I was never by any means equally confident that it pointed to the events of that revolution at all. In order to be convinced that the symbols of any particular prophecy are fulfilled in any particular event; I do indeed require a degree of evidence superior to that, which would ensure the assent of the generality of persons. Of those who have applied the predictions of the Apocalypse to particular occurrences, *many* have *encountered*, and, I am perfectly ready to admit, have *deserved*, the imputation of credulity. But though it be taken for granted, that the vials were to be poured out subsequent to the accomplishment of the French Revolution: it should be observed, in justice to Mr. Fleming's interpretation of the fourth vial, that it does not therefore necessarily follow, that that vial has no reference to the overthrow of the Gallic monarchy. For let it be remembered, that the symbolic sun was extinguished, and the monarchy destroyed, a considerable time after the symbolic earthquake, or insurrection of the people, had taken place.

Some of the arguments, which have been brought forward to prove that all the vials are comprised under the seventh trumpet, shall now be produced<sup>2</sup>. I begin with a quotation from Mr. Whiston, who has investigated this question at great length. 'The natural harmony, and visible method of the prophetic series in this book, does require, that we apply the seven vials to the seventh trumpet, as its proper and only contents. This observation is freely allowed by a very considerable adversary of this opinion, the learned Dr. Cressener, in these remarkable words. "It must," says he, "be acknowledged, that it would make a much fairer shew of concinnity, if the prophecy of the

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2 That the seven vials are comprehended under the seventh trumpet, Mr. Fleming himself declares (p. 59). But then he supposes, as I conceive erroneously, that the period of the seventh trumpet had long ago commenced.

seven vials were included in the last woe, or the seventh trumpet. Otherwise these vials seem to interfere confusedly with the trumpets; some of them in the time of the sixth trumpet, and the rest of them in the time of the seventh<sup>3</sup>." The business of the third woe, or seventh trumpet, and of the seven vials, is the very same; for the vials are the seven plagues whereby the wrath of God is to be completed<sup>4</sup>, and so all his enemies destroyed. And the business and effect of the seventh trumpet is the destruction of the remains of all the tyrannical and idolatrous empires of the world, and the setting up the kingdom of our Saviour. Which effects and consequences both of the seventh trumpet, and of the seven vials, being one and the same, it is highly reasonable, that the causes and instruments in both cases be supposed to be one and the same also: and that therefore the vials be esteemed no other than the contents of the seventh trumpet.' This 'is still more fully confirmed by what farther information we have at the conclusion of the account of the seventh trumpet, of the nature of its principal and concluding judgment, where we find it to be exactly the same that belongs to the concluding vial. At the conclusion of the seventh trumpet it is said, *and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail*<sup>5</sup>. Under the concluding vial we find the same account.—*And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings, and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake and so great.—And there fell upon men great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent*<sup>6</sup>. The words in the original are the very same here which we had before under the seventh trumpet; only with such additional exaggerations as a particular account ought to have above a short and general intimation<sup>7</sup>.'

3 Judgm. on the Rom. Ch. p. 272

4 Rev. xv. 1.

5 XI. 19.

6 XVI. 18, 21.

7. P. 52—61. Of what Mr. Whiston has urged on this point, I have cited only a small part.

‘These seven last plagues *must*,’ says bp. Newton, ‘necessarily fall under the seventh and last trumpet<sup>8</sup>.’ If the seven vials ‘be not the subject of the third woe, the third woe is no where described particularly as are the two former woes. At the sounding of the fifth trumpet (ix. 1.) commences the woe of the Saracen or Arabian locusts; and in the conclusion it is added (ver. 12) *One woe is past, and, behold, there come two woes more hereafter*. At the sounding of the sixth trumpet (ix. 13) begins the plague of the Euphratean horsemen or Turks; and in the conclusion is added (xi. 14). *The second woe is past, and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly*. At the sounding of the seventh trumpet therefore (xi. 15, &c.) one would naturally expect the description of the third woe to succeed: but as it was before observed, there follows only a short and summary account of the seventh trumpet, and of the joyful rather than of the woeful part of it. A general intimation indeed is given of God’s *taking unto him his great power, and destroying them who destroy the earth*: but the particulars are reserved for this place; and if these last plagues coincide not with the last woe, there are other plagues and other woes after the last; and how can it be said that *the wrath of God is filled up in them*, if there are others besides them? If then these seven last plagues synchronise with the seventh and last trumpet, they are all yet to come; for the sixth trumpet is not yet past.’ ‘I make no doubt at all,’ says another celebrated commentator, ‘but that the vials are to be placed in the seventh trumpet after *the rising of the witnesses*<sup>9</sup>.’ It may be added, that among those who suppose some of the vials to have

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8 See this stated and defended by the author of the *New Syst: of the Apoc.* p. 248, 249, and in the *Defence of his Illustrations*; and argued at length in the commentary of a Scotch divine (Durham), which was published more than 130 years since, p. 504. That the seven vials are comprised under the seventh trumpet, was the opinion of the celebrated Martin Luther. See the *Introd. to the Apoc.* by Bengelius (p. 306), who, on this point, agrees in opinion with his illustrious countryman.

9 Dr. More’s *App. to his Comment on Dan.* p. 284.

been poured out, so great is the disagreement with respect to the times of their fulfilment, and so small their success in applying the symbols of particular vials to particular events<sup>10</sup>, as to afford a strong presumption that they are all yet unaccomplished.

The most common mistake, in interpreting the vials, has been to explain them, as if they had no concern with the ten-horned Beast, the representative of the antichristian monarchies, seated in the Western part of the Roman empire, and were judgments to fall exclusively upon the church and pontiffs of Rome.

It has already been seen, that *the third woe*, which is to be directed against *the destroyers of the earth*, was to commence soon after the great revolution in one of the Ten European kingdoms : and a passage has been quoted from Dr. Cressener, wherein he says, ‘ that the executors of the third woe are the risen witnesses, and that they are altogether the agents in it.’ Now, as I apprehend the vials to be nothing more than the constituent parts of the third woe, it follows of course, that if the inhabitants of *the Tenth Part of the symbolic city* are the persons destined by divine providence to have a principal share in inflicting that woe, that they also are to be principally employed, in executing, on the two-horned and the ten-horned Beasts, the several judgments elsewhere described under the figurative diction of the seven vials.

Although I have never seen the vials satisfactorily explained by any of the commentators, yet passages may be selected from them, capable of throwing upon this series of predictions some considerable rays of light. But any precise idea of *the three first vials* I confess myself unable to communicate. With respect to them in general it may be observed, that they appear to have a kindred import, that they are prophetic of a great effusion of blood and of great calamities which are to fall on the antichristian part of mankind, and that the reader’s conception of them will

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10 Bp. Newton, speaking of the vials, says, ‘ the best interpreters’ have ‘ failed and floundered in this part more than in any other.’ P. 255.



be facilitated by the remarks, which will occur in the course of the work on the meaning of particular symbols. The three first vials are thus expressed. *And the first angel went, and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image. And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea; and it became as the blood of a dead man: and every living soul died in the sea. And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters; and they became blood*<sup>11</sup>. St. John immediately adds: *and I heard the angel of the waters say, thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shall be, because thou hast judged thus. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy. And I heard another out of the altar say, even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments*<sup>12</sup>.

The earth, upon which the first vial is to fall, signifies the antichristian part of mankind; and they are to be afflicted with a *noisome and grievous sore*. Now ‘*a sore*,’ says Sir I. Newton, denotes ‘*a durable plague of war*<sup>13</sup>.’ If, as there is reason to believe, *the third woe* has commenced, it follows, that at least the first of the vials must already have begun to be poured out; and with this brief explication of the first vial the existing state of public affairs in the European world perfectly harmonises. The second vial is to be *poured upon the sea*. Now, says Mr. King, ‘*the sea*, as we are told (even by the prophetic angel himself) signifies *multitudes of people*. The pouring out of the vial therefore *upon the sea* is the best image that could be devised, to describe mischief that should arise, from a *general infatuation* of all ranks of people’ in the western parts of the world<sup>14</sup>. ‘It strikes me,’ says Mr. Bicheno, ‘that although the vial which is to be poured out upon *the earth*, will commence first, and that on *the sea* fol-

11 XVI. 2, 3, 4.

12 XVI. 5, 6, 7.

13 P. 23.

14 Morsels of Criticism, 1788, p 435.

low, yet their falling streams will mingle; and although the full torrent of the latter vials may not commence, yet some small portion of them may be dashed upon *the rivers, the sun, or the throne of the beast*, while the first are pouring out; and although the plagues of the latter vials will commence last, as in the vision, yet the streams of the former may still be running<sup>15</sup>. The angels saying of this woe, that it cometh *quickly*, and the circumstances of the seven angels with their vials all appearing, and being sent out at the same time<sup>16</sup>, supposes that they will all be employed together to execute their missions on the several objects of the divine displeasure. And we may hope that these judgments will soon be over<sup>17</sup>.

Having said so much on Mr. Fleming's interpretation of the fourth vial, I shall here confine my observations upon that vial to a very few lines. I begin with asking a question. May it not threaten a diminution and decline of monarchical power in general, in the territories of the Ten-horned Beast? A remark by Mr. Cradock may be here pertinently adduced. 'It is observable that the vials fore-shew Antichrist's ruin by several steps and degrees.—The first five vials do *alter*, but do not utterly *destroy*, the subjects of them.' It is, says Mr. Cradock, for the sixth and seventh vials that the work of destroying is reserved<sup>18</sup>.

15 To the same purpose speak Durham and Daubuz. 'Though,' says the Scotch commentator, 'there be order in *the rise* of these judgments, and all are not poured out together;—yet it will not follow, that the former judgment is *ended*, before another come.' P. 608. 'These plagues,' says Daubuz, 'are so sent upon the corrupted Christians, that although *the beginning* of each is distinct and successive in order of time, yet *their end* is not, but continues afterwards in its effects, notwithstanding the beginning of the rest. So that the plagues are not only fresh and different, but also multiplied upon the subject.' P. 679. The learned author of *the New Syst. of the Apoc.* thinks it impossible to be proved, that the seven vials signify periods of time at all. *Def. of Illust.* p. 4, 7. By some it has been supposed very unreasonably, that they denote not merely periods of time, but periods of an equal duration.

16 XV. 6. xvi. 1

17 Signs of the Times, p. 45.

18 P. 162.

The class of persons spoken of in v. 9, the context teaches us, belong to the symbolic *sun*. They are the members and the partisans of the Ten-horned Beast. That they shall be *scorched with great heat*, that is to say, that they shall be pierced with the sharpest arrows of affliction, is the fact foretold in the commencing clause of the verse. That they shall notwithstanding omit to *repent*, and even *revile the name of God*, are the circumstances predicted in the two subsequent clauses. As far as relates to the conduct and the fate of the satellites and supporters of the Gallic horn of the Secular Beast, this verse may be said to have already received the most exact completion. With respect to those, however, who surround and protect the thrones of the *other* antichristian monarchies, which constitute the symbolic Sun of the European world, or in other words the Ten-horned Beast, the prophecy remains to be accomplished. The idea here suggested, that the fourth vial may have *begun* to be fulfilled, I must again assert, contradicts not the statement I have elsewhere made; namely, that *the Earthquake in the Tenth Part of the symbolic city* occurred prior to the pouring out of the vials. For it is now become a fact recorded in history, that after the French revolution had taken place, a considerable time did elapse, before the partisans of the monarchy were involved in great and general calamity.

On the fifth vial I shall be more particular, because its general meaning appears capable of being penetrated, and it has notwithstanding this, as I conceive, been very generally misapprehended. It is thus expressed: *and the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat*, or, as it ought rather to be translated, *the throne<sup>19</sup> of the Beast*; *and his kingdom was full of darkness*; *and they gnawed their tongues for pain, and blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds<sup>20</sup>*.

19 It is thus translated by Wakefield, Doddridge, and Daubuz.

20 XVI. 10, 11.

Before this vial can be satisfactorily interpreted, two important questions must be resolved. Is the civil, or is the ecclesiastical, Beast, here designed? What does the word, translated *seat*, signify? On the first point I quote from Daubuz; on the second from Lowman. ‘We must,’ says Daubuz on this vial, ‘repeat here what has been observed before, that when the Holy Ghost mentions THE Beast by itself, it is to be understood of the great Beast with seven heads and ten horns, that is, the secular powers within the precincts of the corrupted church, not *the less* Beast with two horns, which is described and said to be *the false prophet*, which signifies the heads of the idolatrous clergy. And that this distinction is true, we need to go no farther to prove, that this very chapter<sup>21</sup> where the three great enemies of Christ are named, *the Dragon, the Beast, and False Prophet*. The Beast thus singly mentioned, being plainly the great Beast aforesaid. Besides, *the throne* spoken of here is *the throne* given to that Beast by the Dragon, in ch. xiii. 2. and not to the False Prophet or less Beast, who is not said to have a throne, but is described as the great assistant of the former.’ ‘This vial,’ says Mr. Lowman, ‘is poured out on *the throne* of the Beast, so the word is in the original<sup>22</sup>. In the scripture-language, *throne*, kingdom, government, authority, dominion, and power, are of like signification<sup>23</sup>; *to translate the kingdom from the house of Saul, and to set up the throne of David over Israel*, is to take the authority and power of government from the one, and give it to the other, 2 Sam. iii. 10.—*The throne* then *of the Beast*, which our translation has rendered his *seat*, seems plainly to mean his authority and power, rather than the city or seat of his residence<sup>24</sup>. For the prophetic language puts a throne to

21 XVI. 13.

22 *Επὶ τὸν θρόνον.*

23 After referring to several passages in the Jewish scriptures in confirmation of this, Dr. Lancaster observes, that ‘a *throne* is by all the onecritics explained of power.’

24 This meaning indeed it cannot have; because the Beast with Ten Horns, the representative of the antichristian monarchies, has *no* particular place of rule and residence.



signify, not the seat of a kingdom, but its power and authority. And so this very prophecy explains it; this angel poured out his vial on *the seat of the Beast, and his kingdom was full of darkness.* That ‘darkness is the symbol of misery and adversity,’ Dr. Lancaster observes; and, in proof of this, appeals to different passages in the Hebrew prophets. The meaning then of a vial of divine wrath being *poured upon the throne of THE Beast* appears to be this: that divine providence will cause events to happen, eminently injurious to *the power and authority* of the antichristian monarchies of Europe. Accordingly Lowman, in explication of the prophet’s words, that *the kingdom of the Beast was full of darkness*, says ‘darkness is an emblem of affliction; a kingdom full of darkness will then naturally signify a great diminution of power, and decay of authority.’ In order faithfully to represent the excess of mortification and anguish, which shall in consequence be felt by the members and supporters of the ten-horned Beast, it is said, that *they gnawed their tongues for pain*; and in the next verse it is added, that they *blasphemed the God of heaven, because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds.* Instead of being reformed, says Lowman in his paraphrase, ‘they rather blasphemed the supreme governor of the world, by accusing his providence, on account of the evils which came upon them, but had no thoughts of repentance for those evil actions, the true reason why they were punished.’

The following are the ideas, which Dr. Cressener entertained above a century ago respecting the fifth vial. Whether they correspond to the state of things, which is likely to take place in the course of the third woe, and previous to its termination, it is for the attentive reader to meditate on and to determine. Having observed, that by *the throne of the Beast*, may ‘be meant only his supreme authority in general,’ he says, this plague ‘falls upon *the throne and kingdom of the Beast*, which does very naturally signify the beginning of a general humiliation of the power of the Beast in all the Ten Kingdoms, of which his Kingdom

consists<sup>25</sup>.' 'It seems,' this learned commentator elsewhere says, 'to be some great confusion and vexation in the kingdom of the Beast, and promises 'an universal disturbance in the whole extent of it<sup>26</sup>. Among the arguments which he alleges in proof of this, is the following: 'the fifth vial is an humiliation of the power of the Beast in all parts of his dominion, because this darkness is expressed to fill his kingdom<sup>27</sup>.' I conclude the chapter with observing, that the fourth and the fifth vials appear to be intimately connected with each other, and that, prior to their fulfilment, it is not perhaps possible to mark out the essential difference between them.

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## CHAPTER XII.

### ON ST. PAUL'S PREDICTION OF THE MAN OF SIN.

BEFORE I pass on to the consideration of the sixth and seventh vials, or of any predictions which respect *Political* events; I shall direct the attention of the reader to some of those prophecies, which have an immediate reference to the exercise and the extinction of *Ecclesiastical* tyranny. Of the two-horned Beast, the emblem of the anti-christian priesthood, some account has already been given. But there are other prophecies, relating to the same subject, which, in a work like the present, ought not to be passed by unnoticed. Such are those by St. John respecting the symbolic *Babylon*. Daniel's description of the *little horn of the Fourth Beast*, and St. Paul's prophecy of the *Man of Sin*.

I begin with the last of these predictions. St. Paul, speaking of the *coming of Christ*, a phrase often applied in scripture to the commencement of the millennium, says,

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25 Judgm. on the Rom. Ch. p. 213, 258.

26 P. 141, 212.

27 P. 253.

that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped, so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. Remember ye not, that when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that wicked one be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming<sup>1</sup>.

On this prophecy, which appears to foretell a general apostacy in the Christian church, a number of valuable observations occur in Mr. Evanson's able *Letter to Bishop Hurd*; and I cannot, without transcribing liberally from it, do justice to what he has urged. 'The name of *the man of sin*, which is made use of in this prophecy,' says Mr. Evanson, 'neither your Lordship, nor any approved commentator, supposes to signify any one particular man, but merely a human power, possessed and actually exerted by a succession of different men. And it is not easy to conceive, how any one should have understood that phrase in a more limited sense.—As *man of God* evidently means not any particular man, but every sincere and good Christian in all ages and nations of the world; so *the man of sin* undoubtedly signifies not any one man alone, but every man<sup>2</sup>, or number of men, in all ages, and I must add, in

1 II. Thess. ii. 3—8.

2 Mr. Buan Herport, who was persecuted and imprisoned at Bern, (as quoted by Mr. Taylor of Portsmouth), in like manner says, "the man of Perdition, Antichrist, is to be found in all places. Whoever makes himself judge over his brother, forcibly obtrudes on him his own imaginations, and thus sets up himself in the temple of God; he usurps Christ's prerogative, burthens conscience with terrible oaths for the sake of human edicts, and persecutes the true disciples, the living members of the church. Whoever does these things, whether Pope or King, Sovereign or Magistrate, Clergy or Layman, is ANTICHRIST." See *Farther Thoughts on the Grand Apostacy*, p. 31.

all places too, (though there, perhaps, your Lordship will not agree with me) whose peculiar station and circumstances shall be found to correspond to the prophetic description here given us.' Mr. Evanson has also asked his lordship some embarrassing questions. 'When our own eighth Henry, from motives of mere personal resentment, thought fit to transfer the very same supremacy from the person of the pope to himself, within the limits of his own dominions; when the same spiritual courts subsisted, the same ecclesiastical jurisdiction was continued under him, which had been established under the Roman pontiff; when, in the full spirit of papal tyranny, he burnt some of his subjects for not renouncing the authority of the pope, and others for renouncing some of the grossest errors of popery: had not *he* also every feature of *the man of sin*? Nay, even in the days of reformation, and the reigns of protestant princes, when, by virtue of the very same assumed authority and supreme power in religious affairs; and, by the same mode of ecclesiastical jurisdiction, numbers of conscientious persons were imprisoned, fined, tortured, and even burned to death, for not professing, or not conforming to, what they were firmly persuaded was repugnant to the commands of God, were none of the distinguishing marks of this predicted, impious power to be discerned in our own country? Or shall the same characters be allowed to denote *the man of God* in England, which in Italy serve to point out *the man of sin and son of perdition*?'

The expression, *the temple of God*, is perfectly consistent with this general application of the prophecy. It 'must,' says bp. Hurd, 'be interpreted of the Christian church, and could not, in the prophetic language, be interpreted otherwise.' 'It is certain,' declares bp. Newton, that '*the temple or house of God* is the Christian church in the usual style of the Apostles.' When therefore *the man of Sin* is said to *sit in the temple of God*, it is, as both these



dignitaries remark, the same thing as if it had been said, *he ruleth in the church of Christ.*

‘There was,’ says the bp. of Bristol, ‘some obstacle that hindered his appearance, the apostle speaketh doubtfully whether thing or person<sup>6</sup>.’ By this prelate and by most other writers, *the Roman empire* is conceived to have been this obstacle. But, in the opinion of Mr. Evanson, it ‘was *the paganism* of the Roman emperors.’ This, says he, ‘so long as it is continued, must, in the very nature of things, prevent the civil power of the empire from being exerted to establish and support any nominally Christian church.—It is true, this interpretation makes the civil magistrate the chief cause and supporter of the general confirmed apostacy from true Christianity. And it appears to me impossible, that it could have been effected by any other means. Even within the precincts of the Holy See, the Romish superstition is maintained solely by the power the pope possesseth as a civil potentate, not as an ecclesiastic; and within the dominions of other princes, when the authority and influence of the church of Rome extended farthest, it never did nor could enforce obedience to its decrees and ordinances, but under the protection and by the aid of the civil government in each particular country.’

‘St. Paul tells the Thessalonians that the *COMING* of this *man of sin* would be not only *with all power*, but *with signs and lying wonders*. And if it be thought right to understand this circumstance as descriptive of the appearance of the first man, who usurped a spiritual tyranny over the minds of his fellow-citizens, and impiously arrogated to himself the power of ordaining articles of faith and religious doctrine, which are not required of Christians in the gospel, it is most remarkably applicable to the person of Constantine; for his conversion happened when he was at the head of a powerful army, and was pretended to have

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6 Newton, vol. II. p. 349.

7 P. 25.

been occasioned by the miraculous vision of a crucifix in the clouds, whose celestial inscription promised him victory, upon his adopting the profession signified by that sign or emblem. But, from the application which the Protestants uniformly make of this part of the prophecy to the fabulous legends of the Roman Catholics, I conclude, there is something in the turn of expression of the whole sentence taken together, which is thought more adapted to the pastors of the apostate church, than to the temporal potentate, by whose power the apostacy was to be established. And, even in this sense, your Lordship well knows the prophecy will apply as strongly to the ecclesiastics of the fourth century, as to those of the church of Rome. The pretended miracles of that period are very numerous<sup>8</sup>.

The prophecy of the '*man of sin sitting in the temple of God, and shewing himself there as God, seemed,*' says Dr. Cressener, 'to be in its first formation by the conduct of some of the Roman emperors soon after the advancement of Christianity upon the throne. The very first fruits of the imperial authority in the church, in the days of Constantine, and even before the full end of the Pagan persecution with Licinius, were the depositions and banishments of the Arian bishops.—The Roman councils began also at the same time to be accounted the *infallible* oracles of God. Constantine says of the council of Nice, that it was inspired by the will of God himself<sup>9</sup>. And that that which seemed good to them was to be taken for nothing less than the mind of God.—To pronounce the peremptory curses of the church upon conscientious dissenters in such speculative and abstruse matters as these, and to deprive them of the necessary comforts of this life for it, and thus to over-awe them to take that for the inspired will of God, which they would apprehend to be no more at best than the philosophical exercises of men's wits, did plainly manifest

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<sup>8</sup> Let. to bp. Hurd. p. 26.

<sup>9</sup> Socrates, lib. I. Ep. Constantini ad Ecclesiam Alexandriæ.

a somewhat too assuming spirit in the government of the church in those days<sup>10</sup>.'

Perhaps it will be urged, that the excellence of Constantine's character forbids such an explication of the prophecy as Mr. Evanson has suggested. But the fact is, that a man may, by acts of persecution and the exercise of spiritual tyranny, betray the genuine features of the man of sin, and come fairly within the line of the prophetic description, though his actions should be far from being particularly vicious. Besides, is it not true, that the excellency of this emperor's character is rather problematical<sup>11</sup>? 'It must,' says Mosheim, 'be confessed, that the life and actions of this prince were not such as the Christian religion demands from those who profess to believe its sublime doctrines<sup>12</sup>.' That he should have taken away the lives of so *many* of his relations, had not his disposition been cruel, seems scarcely credible. He put to death, says Dr. Lardner, 'Maximian Herculus, his wife's father; Bassianus, husband of his sister Anastasia; Crispus, his own son; Fausta, his wife; Licinius, husband of his sister Constantia; and Licinianus, or Licinius the younger, his nephew.' Crispus, at the time when Constantine deprived him of that life which he had once given him, was 25 years of age; and, says Dr. Lardner, 'a person of great qualifications, who had been serviceable to his father in the wars with the Franks and with Licinius.—Eusebius would have excused this thing, if he had been able; but he saw no other method he could take, but to pass it by in utter silence.—The younger Licinius could not then be more than a little above eleven years of age, if so much: he is also spoken of as a hopeful youth<sup>13</sup>.'

10 Judgm. on the Rom. Ch. p. 56.

11 The character of Constantine, says Mr. Gibbon, 'has fixed the attention, and divided the opinions, of mankind.' Decl. and Fall of the R. E. vol. III. p. 99.

12 Eccl. Hist. vol. I. p. 262.

13 Lardner's works, 1788, vol. IV. p. 174, 176. There is reason to think, that Constantine was a *believer* in Christianity. But his belief was

Like most other members of the English hierarchy, bp. Newton applies the prophecy under consideration exclusively to the pope of Rome ; and describes *the man of sin* as not having been fully manifested before the eighth century<sup>14</sup>, when Pepin and Charlemagne attacked and defeated the kings of Lombardy on behalf of the pontiffs, and laid the foundation of their independent authority<sup>15</sup>. But surely *the coming* of the man of sin cannot be explained of the papal power; because he was *already* come, and had long been so, before the power of the pontiffs was established or acknowledged in Europe. One should be tempted to suspect, were not the fact known to be otherwise, that there was a wide chasm in ecclesiastical history, and that the bp. of Bristol, and those who coincide with him in sentiment, had never read of the fundamental corruptions, which were incorporated with Christianity between the commencement of the Fourth, and that of the Eighth, century. In truth, the Fourth century was the period, in which almost every kind of spiritual usurpation, and almost every species of superstition, were introduced and encouraged. To those who doubt whether the usurpations and superstitions of that century *were* tinged with the dark stain of antichristianism, I recommend as worthy of their attention, first the words of our apostle, who de-

vain, for it produced not the fruits of virtuous conduct. When a Christian, he behaved far worse than he had before done when a pagan. Mr. Gibbon asserts, and the assertion is not entirely destitute of foundation, that ‘as he gradually advanced in the knowledge of truth, he proportionably declined in the practice of virtue.’ vol. III. p. 274. ‘It is probable,’ says archdeacon Paley, ‘that Constantine declared himself on the side of the Christians, because they were the powerful party.’ *Evid. of Christianity*, vol. III. p. 37. Not very different is the language of Dr. Lardner. Speaking of Constantine and Maxentius, he says, ‘of those who were contending for worldly power and empire, one actually favored and flattered them, and another may be suspected to have joined himself to them, partly from considerations of interest. So greatly had this people increased under external disadvantages of all sorts !’ vol IV. p. 161.

14 See vol. II. p. 380—385.

15 This was in the years 754, 755, and 774.



clares, that even in his days *the mystery of iniquity was already working*; and secondly those of St. John, who says in his first epistle, *many false teachers*<sup>15</sup> *are gone out into the world*, and again a verse or two farther, speaking of *the spirit of antichrist*, that *even now already is it in the world*<sup>17</sup>.

*The man of sin* is represented by St. Paul as not merely domineering in the church of Christ, but domineering there as if he were a God. And which of the established churches of Europe has not assumed claims, and exercised powers, which only omniscience and infallibility would authorise? In some respects, indeed, the protestant hierarchies have violated the rights of conscience and of private judgment in a more indecent manner than the church of Rome herself. The Papists, says archdeacon Blackburne, in the controversies carried on between them and the Protestants, alleged ‘(what indeed was very true) that the most considerable of the points in dispute among THEM had never been decided *e cathedra*, and so were left open to amicable debate without breach of unity; whereas the doctrines controverted among Protestants were solemnly established in their several confessions, and the confessions themselves ratified by oaths, subscriptions, &c. and the belief of them thereby made an indispensable condition of communion’<sup>18</sup>.

But I will again quote the words of the apostle, who describes the man of sin as a personage, *who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped, so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God*. The dominion of the man of sin, says Mr. Wakefield in his paraphrase on this passage, ‘will not be a political dominion, directed to the civil and secular concerns of the community: his tribunal will not

15 In the common version it is; *prophets* in Mr. Wakefield’s, *teachers*.

17 IV. 1, 3. In ch. ii. of the same epistle he had said (v. 18), *even now are there MANY ANTICHRISTS*.

18 Confessional, 3d ed. p. 10.

be placed in a common court of justice, but *in the temple of God*. He will *seat himself* on the throne of the Almighty, and act as his representative and substitute. His laws, like those of Jehovah, *who knoweth the heart*, will extend to the minds and consciences of his subjects, so that their faith and their very *thoughts*, shall be regulated by his dictates, and submit themselves to his authority<sup>19</sup>.’

Of such persons as acknowledge this antichristian authority, St. Paul says, that they shall be under *strong delusion, that they should believe a lie*<sup>20</sup>. And surely this is not a distinctive mark of the church of Rome. Not only her members, but those also of the Greek church and of other hierarchies are deluded into the belief of opinions altogether false<sup>21</sup>, and servilely accommodate their faith to that of the priesthood. It is not in her creeds alone, but in those also of other churches, that doctrines, alike unfounded and pernicious, are not merely authoritatively enjoined, but are likewise represented as essential to salvation.

The ‘*general immorality of the apostate Christians*,’ says the writer of the letter to bp. Hurd, was also ‘plainly intimated to the Thessalonians,’ in the prophecy of the man of sin. Thus in v. 12. those deceived by him are spoken of as *having pleasure in unrighteousness*. ‘And the whole world,’ says Mr. Evanson, ‘is witness, how truly this predicted circumstance hath been fulfilled in the lives of nominal Christians of every country in Christendom, from the beginning of the fourth century to the present hour. From this mark and character of Antichrist at least, (though it be, without doubt, the worst and most deplora-

19 Four marks of Antichrist, p. 13.

20 V. 11. In another of his epistles, St. Paul says, *the time will come, when professed Christians will not endure sound doctrine, but—shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned to fables*. II. Tim. iv. 3, 4.

21 ‘Those of the Pretended Reformed Religion acknowledge,’ says Bossuet, the celebrated bishop of Meaux, ‘that the catholic church embraces all the fundamental articles of the Christian religion.’ *Expos. of the Doct. of the Cath. Ch.* translated into Eng. Lond. 1686. p. 2.

ble of all,) even Protestant churches cannot plead exemption<sup>22</sup>.'

But the authority of *the man of sin*, however firmly established, and universally extended, is not destined to be perpetual. *The Lord shall consume him with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy him with the brightness of his coming.* We are assured by the apostle, says Mr. Evan-son in his paraphrase on these words, 'that at length this impious tyranny would decline, and gradually be consumed, by the restoration of the genuine doctrine of Christ's Gospel, here metaphorically called *the breath of his mouth*: and will be finally destroyed at that grand revolution of human affairs, which is so frequently alluded to in the Holy Scriptures, and denominated *the coming of Jesus Christ*<sup>23</sup>.' To suppose, as bp. Newton and many others have done, that *the coming of Christ* is not the commencement of the millennium, but the day of judgment; is to suppose, that antichristianism and ecclesiastical tyranny will continue to prevail till the end of the world. Contrary as this is to the most express prophecies, some writers, having this passage in view, and perceiving that the latter conclusion would evidently follow from the admission of the former, have avowed this melancholy and dispiriting opinion. The words of St. Paul, which have just been quoted, 'signify,' says Slichtingius, 'that *the man of sin* would remain till *the coming of Christ*, and would be destroyed by his coming.' Now *the coming of Christ*, adds this celebrated commentator, is here to be explained of his advent on the day of Judgment.

At the same time I feel no hesitation in admitting, that the Thessalonian Christians, as well as those of other countries, in consequence of *the coming of Christ* being an equivocal expression, and of their being uninstructed with respect to the millennium, probably did, in the time of St. Paul, understand it in a literal sense, and conceive it to

22 P. 31.

23 Let. to Hurd, p. 20.

signify the awful day of Christ's coming to Judgment<sup>24</sup>. At that period the Apocalypse was not published; and, when published, its meaning, as well as that of Daniel, was destined, during many centuries, to be very imperfectly penetrated. Of what they foretold even the prophets themselves had sometimes a very imperfect idea. Thus in the xiith ch. of Daniel (v. 8), that prophet says, *and I heard, but I understood not*; and the angel of the vision is represented in v. 9 as saying unto him, *go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end*. On this passage an intelligent commentator, who wrote 150 years since, has the following remarks. 'Therefore the foresaid mysteries, especially those about the times of Antichrist, God *intended* to conceal and hide for a certain time, and only to reveal the same in the last time. And unto this place our Saviour seemeth to have respect when he saith, that no man knoweth the day and hour, not so much as the angels of heaven, but the Father only, Matt. xxiv. 15, 36. And when he saith, *'it is not for you to know the times, which the Father hath put in his own power*. Acts i. 7. Wherefore Christ exhorteth the present age, that they would be watchful, because they knew not the time of the end: forasmuch as it was to be hidden from the former ages, lest the long distance of the time being known should hinder the duty of watchfulness. But *in the time of the end*—it seemeth that it is to be revealed: not unto the world, on whom the end shall come as *a thief in the night*, especially the last part of the last time: but

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<sup>24</sup> Nor is this misconception wonderful. 'For the old prophets, for the most part,' I am now quoting from Mede, 'speak of *the coming of Christ*, indefinitely and in general, without that distinction of *First* and *Second* coming, which the Gospel out of Daniel hath more clearly taught us. And so consequently they spake of the things to be at Christ's coming indefinitely and altogether, which we, who are now more fully informed by the revelation of the gospel of a two-fold coming, must apply each of them to its proper time: those things which befit the state of his *first coming* unto it; and such things as befit the state of his *second coming*, unto his second.' p. 755.



unto the saints<sup>25</sup>,’ unto those that are genuine Christians and honest inquirers after truth.

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## APPENDIX TO CHAPTER XII.

### ON THE CORRUPTIONS WHICH PREVAILED IN THE FOURTH CENTURY.

I HAVE stated (and I know not whether the statement may not have startled some of my readers),<sup>26</sup> that almost every kind of ecclesiastical usurpation was introduced, and almost every species of superstition encouraged, in the fourth century. The historic extracts, intended to confirm and to elucidate this assertion, are more numerous, than the nature of the present work would have authorised, had not a number of reasons, in this particular case, concurred to recommend their insertion. This copiousness of citation I have been encouraged to introduce; because an assertion of such weight, on the very face of it, seemed to require for proof a long series of well attested particulars; because facts of this description it was in my power to produce, from as high and as unexceptionable authority, as can be appealed to on the subject; because the investigation of it will be hereafter serviceable in directing us to the true interpretation of one of the apocalyptic visions<sup>27</sup>; because it respects a period, which constitutes one of the most interesting portions of ecclesiastical history; and because persons in general are, I believe, unapprised of the extent to which the assertion is true, and of the rapidity

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25 Tho. Parker of New-England on Daniel, 1646, p. 132.

26 The reign of Constantine, and the fourth century in general, some have represented in a highly favorable point of view. The Gospel ‘was enabled,’ says bishop Hallifax, ‘at length, under the auspices of Constantine, to establish itself, in prosperity and PURITY, throughout the provinces of the Roman empire.’ Serm. on Proph. p. 313.

27 I particularly allude to all the latter part of ch. viii. of the Rev,

with which Christianity was changed and essentially debased. Nor are these all the reasons which may be alleged to justify the introduction of the present appendix. This inquiry is of great importance in ascertaining the period of *the coming of the man of sin*; in determining whether that prediction is to be exclusively applied to the Roman pontiffs; in qualifying us to judge whether the emperor Constantine does in truth stand convicted of the charge of notorious antichristianism; and in deciding a question, which must probably have sometimes arisen in the inquiring mind, did this celebrated prince render upon the whole a real service to the religion of Jesus, when he embraced the external profession of it, and accelerated its general diffusion; whilst at the same time he brought about an unnatural union between the church and the state, placed himself at the head of the former as well as the latter, and substantially aided the attempts of those, who labored with such fatal success to paganize Christianity, by incorporating with it not a few of the speculative opinions, and many of the superstitious practices, which before belonged to heathenism?

It is from the judicious and learned Mosheim that the extracts are principally taken<sup>28</sup>. To him indeed it might have been sufficient to have barely referred the reader, had the facts, which are most decisive and throw the strongest light on the topics proposed, lain together, unintermingled with other matter. But, besides that the greater part of my readers would in all probability have omitted to consult Mosheim at all, it deserves to be noticed, that these facts are dispersed over his *Internal History of the Church* during the fourth century, which alone occupies upwards of 70 very closely printed octavo pages. To superadd some particulars from other writers was also expedient. But that the reader may exactly know, *how much* of the present appendix belongs to Mosheim, I have, through the greater part of it, made *no* addition in the text to the facts alleged by him; and when I have, intimation is given of

it. Of the additional observations some are transcribed from the accurate Lardner: and of the notes the greater part are taken from a writer, in whose commendation it is not easy to speak sufficiently high; I mean from Dr. Jortin, who, by introducing, in his *Life of Erasmus*, and in his *Remarks on Ecclesiastical History*, quotations from various authors, often running to a considerable length, and scattered with great profusion, has annexed the stamp of his approbation to this mode of conducting a work.

It may be asked, why, in an account of the corruptions of the fourth century, is not an appeal directly made to ancient instead of modern authorities? why are not passages translated and transcribed from such well known historians, as Socrates, Sozomen, and Eusebius? I answer, that all the writers of that time were tinctured with prejudices; that they were far from having such enlarged views of things as a judicious and industrious modern is capable of acquiring; and that I know no writers of antiquity in whose statements the public could justly place so strong a confidence, as in those of Jortin, Lardner, and Mosheim. The reader will readily discern, where I have given only *the sentiments*, and where *the words*, of Mosheim; as in the former case I have omitted the use of inverted commas.

The first step of the bishops, in changing the ancient government of the church, says Mosheim in his account of the Fourth Century, ‘was an entire exclusion of the people from all part in the administration of ecclesiastical affairs; and afterwards they, by degrees, divested even the presbyters of their ancient privileges and their primitive authority, that they might have no importunate protesters to control their ambition, or oppose their proceedings; and, principally, that they might either engross to themselves, or distribute as they thought proper, the possessions and revenues of the church<sup>29</sup>. Hence it came to pass, that

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29 Constantius, besides endowing many churches with great revenues, exempted the bishops from every kind of tax. *Anc. Univ. Hist.* vol. XVI, p, 230.



at the conclusion of this century, there remained no more than A MERE SHADOW OF THE ANCIENT GOVERNMENT OF THE CHURCH.' And whilst, on the one hand, 'they trampled upon the rights of the people,' and 'violated the privileges of the inferior ministers:' on the other they imitated in their conduct and manner of living, the arrogance, voluptuousness, and luxury of magistrates and princes,' and 'contended with each other, in the most scandalous manner, concerning the extent of their respective jurisdictions'<sup>30</sup>—The external administration of the church, the emperor assumed to himself<sup>31</sup>.

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30 Sometimes also their manner of contending for the episcopal dignity was highly scandalous. Le Clerc, as translated by Jortin, says, that as soon as Ursinus had been elected bishop of Rome by a number of the brethren, deacons and presbyters, 'Damasus, who had always been making interest for the bishopric,—with the perjured crew that followed him, and with a band of gladiators, to whom he had given large sums of money, seized the Lateran church, and was there ordained. Then having bribed two magistrates of the city, he caused Ursinus, a venerable man, who had been first made bishop, to be sent into banishment.—The Roman people assembled together, and would have hindered Damasus from taking possession of the pontificate; but he cleared his way through them by blows and bastinadoes; and some died of the wounds which they had received. He also attempted to drive out of the city seven presbyters, who were put into prison by the magistrates; but the faithful people rescued them, and carried them into the church of Liberius. Then Damasus, *with the ecclesiastics* of his faction, joined to gladiators charioteers, and rustics, armed with hatchets, swords, and clubs, besieged the church, and began a furious battle, setting fire to the doors, and bursting them open, whilst others of his partizans had clambered up, and were pelting their adversaries with tiles from the top of the edifice. Thus the Damascians forced their way in, and slew 160 persons, men and women.—The strangest part of the story is that, notwithstanding all these things, Damasus was a great saint, and miracles were wrought in his favor after his death.' The contest happened in the year 366. I have not given the whole detail of it. Had not a large part of the Christians of Rome, at this period, been extremely corrupt, it could not have been conducted in the manner in which it was; it could not have had a termination so favorable to Damasus. See Jortin, vol. IV. p. 60.

31 'Upon Constantine's conversion there appeared a new form of government in the church. It was the emperor that summoned the General Councils at his pleasure. He often presided himself in them, and managed



‘The greatest part, both of the bishops and presbyters, were men *entirely destitute of all learning and education.*’ And that ‘savage and illiterate party, who looked upon all sorts of erudition, particularly that of a philosophical kind, as pernicious and even destructive to true piety and religion, increased both in number and authority<sup>32</sup>—The truth of doctrines was now proved by the number of martyrs that had professed them, by miracles, by the confession of demons, i. e. of persons possessed with evil spirits.—Those vain fictions, which an attachment to the Platonic philosophy, and to popular opinions, had engaged the greatest part of the Christian doctors to adopt before the time of Constantine, were now confirmed, enlarged, and embellished in various ways.’

‘It would seem as if all possible means had been industriously used, to give an air of folly and extravagance to the Christian assemblies. For the people were permitted, nay, even exhorted by the preacher himself, to crown his talents with clapping of hands and loud acclamations of applause.’

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the disputes there.—Those that were the judges of the assembly in his absence were delegated from him; *his* will was consulted on all occasions; the definition of faith, that the council subscribed to, was many times proposed by him; and it was called the Emperor’s Definition of Faith.’ Agreeably to this, we find the title of ‘*Universal Bishop* of the church, in respect of the external government of it, assumed by Constantine;’ and we likewise ‘see what effect the fear of the imperial authority had upon the councils themselves. For all the councils, assembled under Arian emperors, were of the same mind with the emperor that called them.’ Cressener on the Prot. Appl. of the Apoc. p. 258.

32 In the reign of Constantine, ‘and in the fourth century, as religious and metaphysical quarrels ran high, and monkery grew and prospered, and miracles abounded, so liberal arts and sciences and polite literature fell into a declining condition.’ Jortin’s *Rem. on Eccl. Hist.* 1767, vol. II p. 228. Basnage, speaking of this century and of Jerom, says, ‘St. Austin, who did not love him, yet admired him as a prodigy, because he understood three languages.’ *Hist des Juifs*, b. vi. ch. 14. ‘Let not a bishop peruse the books of heathen writers,’ is a part of the 16th canon of the 4th council of Carthage, which was assembled near the termination of this century.

‘An enormous train of different superstitions were gradually substituted in the place of true religion and genuine piety. This odious *Revolution* was owing to a variety of causes. A ridiculous precipitation in receiving new opinions, a preposterous desire of imitating the pagan rites, and of blending them with the Christian worship, and that idle propensity which the generality of mankind have towards a gaudy and ostentatious religion, all contributed to establish the reign of superstition upon the ruins of Christianity<sup>33</sup>.’ Superstition was NOW BECOME UNIVERSAL.

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33 In the 9th canon of the council, which met at Neocæsarea about the year 314, it is observed of sins in general, that they may be pardoned by the imposition of hands. ‘Those Christians who were conscious of their own defects began to pay immoderate honors to the martyrs, that by their interest they might obtain remission of sins. These practices suited the half-converts and nominal Christians, who came over for the loaves, under Christian emperors.’ Jortin, vol. II. p. 156. Ambrose of Milan, Augustine of Hippo, and Chrysostom of Constantinople, all enjoyed the episcopal dignity in the fourth century, and towards the close of it. ‘Chrysostom magnifies the sacerdotal office upon a double account, because the priests have power to remit sins both when they regenerate us, and afterwards: that is, both by baptism and penance.’ And the same is asserted in the works of Ambrose and Augustine. Bingham’s *Antiq. of the Chr. Ch.* b. xix. ch. i. This learned writer, like a faithful son of the English church, readily admits the legitimacy of this lofty claim of these ancient prelates; and declares, in a visitation sermon preached in 1716, that ‘IT IS EVIDENT BEYOND DISPUTE, THAT CHRIST LEFT A POWER IN THE HANDS OF HIS MINISTERS TO RETAIN, OR TO FORGIVE MEN’S SINS.’ Bingham’s work’s, vol. II. p. 258.

The mischief produced by the superstitious ideas relative to baptism, it is not possible to calculate. The statement which follows is from Mr. Gibbon. It is, I believe, perfectly correct. ‘The sacrament of baptism was supposed to contain a full and absolute expiation of sin; and the soul was instantly restored to its original purity, and entitled to the promise of eternal salvation. Among the proselytes of Christianity, there were many who judged it imprudent to precipitate a salutary rite, which could not be repeated; to throw away an inestimable privilege, which could never be recovered.—The fathers, who censured this criminal delay, could not deny the certain and victorious efficacy, even of a death-bed baptism.’ It was in his last illness, that Constantine ‘received the sacrament of baptism.’ Eusebius ‘supposes the salvation of Constantine with the most perfect confidence.’ His example and reputation ‘seemed to countenance the

This, among other unhappy effects, opened a wide door to the endless frauds of those odious impostors, who were so far destitute of all principle, as to enrich themselves<sup>34</sup> by the ignorance and errors of the people. Rumors were artfully spread abroad of prodigies and miracles to be seen in certain places (a trick often practised by the heathen priests); and the design of these reports was to draw the populace, in multitudes, to these places, and to impose upon their credulity. These stratagems were generally successful.—A whole volume would be requisite to contain an enumeration of the various frauds, which artful knaves practised, with success, to delude the ignorant, *when true religion was almost entirely superseded by horrid superstition.*'

delay of baptism. Future tyrants were encouraged to believe, that the innocent blood which they might shed in a long reign would instantly be washed away in the waters of regeneration; and the abuse of religion dangerously undermined the foundation of moral virtue.' Vol. III, p. 237.

Mention has been made of penance. Very prolix and ceremonious was the performance of it, in the 4th century. It is thus described by Basil, who was bp. of Cæsarea, and died about the year 379. Penitents, 'the 1st year, are to weep before the gate of the church; the 2d year, to be admitted to hearing; the third year, to genuflexion, or repentance properly so called; and the 4th year, to stand with the faithful at prayers without partaking the oblation.' They wore sackcloth, says Bingham, through all the stages of this business. *Antiq. of the Chr. Ch.* b. xviii. ch. i. ii. Various were the expedients, which the prelates and clergy of the 4th century adopted, in order to infuse into the people a mysterious reverence for themselves. The 20th canon of the council of Laodicea, held about the year 363, forbids a deacon from sitting down in the presence of a priest, without his express permission: and ordains, that an inferior minister shall shew the same mark of submissive respect to the deacon.

34 In the art of enriching themselves, ecclesiastics in general became great adepts during this century. To such an height indeed did this evil rise, that Valentinian 'found it necessary to make a law against pious donations to the clergy and to the monks, who preyed upon stupid bigots, and devoured widow's houses;' and even Fleury, though a Romish ecclesiastic, declares, that the law was 'shameful to the clergy, but yet necessary.' Jortin, vol. IV. p. 52.

‘No sooner had Constantine the Great abolished the superstitions of his ancestors, than magnificent churches<sup>35</sup> were every where erected for the Christians, which were richly adorned with pictures and images, and bore striking resemblance to the Pagan temples, both in their outward and inward form. Of these churches some were built over the tombs of martyrs, and were frequented only at stated times; while others were set apart for the ordinary assemblies of Christians.—Both of them were consecrated with great pomp, and with certain rites borrowed, mostly, from the ancient laws of the Roman pontiffs.’ Frequent pilgrimages, the excessive multiplication of festivals in honor of the martyrs, an extravagant veneration for departed saints<sup>36</sup>, absurd notions of a certain fire destined to purify separate souls, the imposition of frequent fasts, the celebration of the Lord’s supper at the tombs of martyrs, whence originated masses, the holding up of the bread and wine to be revered by the people<sup>37</sup>, a belief in the mysterious efficacy of relics, of holy water, and of the images of saints<sup>38</sup>, were practices and superstitions, all of which ex-

35 The masterly historian of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, speaking of those erected by Constantine in its principal cities, says, ‘the walls, the columns, the pavement, were incrustated with variegated marble;’ and ‘the most precious ornaments of gold and silver, of silk and gems, were profusely dedicated to the service of the altar.’ Vol. III. p. 293.

36 It is shewn at large in Sir I. Newton’s *Obs. on Dan.* (p. 209—231), that the worship and invocation of saints became a common and authorised practice in the 4th century.

37 This practice, together with the language held in this century by some of the fathers, laid a foundation for the most absurd of all doctrines, the doctrine of transubstantiation. Thus Jerom, when speaking of the frugal manner with which Exuperius of Tholouse administered the Lord’s Supper, says, he ‘carries the body of Christ in a basket of osiers, and his blood in a glass-cup.’ *Hieronymi Epist. Rustico Monaco.*

38 The sign of the cross also was used as a kind of charm, not only in the services of religion, but in the most indifferent actions of life. Sir I. Newton’s *Obs. on Dan.* ch. xiii; and Bingham’s *Antiq. of the Chr. Ch.* b. xi ch. 10.



tensively prevailed in this century, and received the greatest encouragement<sup>39</sup>. Christianity was now indeed completely paganised. ‘The religion of the Greeks and Romans differed very little in its external appearance from that of the Christians. They had both a most pompous and splendid ritual. Gorgeous robes, mitres, tiaras, wax-tapers<sup>40</sup> crosiers, processions, lustrations, images, gold and silver vases, and many such circumstances of pageantry, were EQUALLY to be seen in the heathen temples and the Christian churches<sup>41</sup>.’ And it was in this century, that

39 The words of Vigilantius, as quoted by his antagonist Jerom, do, says Daubuz, ‘demonstrate that the errors in the common practice of the people, were greater than what we find in the authors’ of that time. Vigilantius ‘opposed the invocation and worship of saints; prayers for the dead; the adoration of relics and images; the burning of tapers by day; and the celibacy of the clergy.’ So far Daubuz (on Rev. p. 392). What was the consequence of his virtuous opposition to the tide of popular superstitions? He was frowned upon as a person guilty of heresy, ‘Vigilantius,’ says Jortin, ‘was insulted and reviled by Jerom.—It is really a wonder that he fared no worse, and that some zealous monk did not beat his brains out with the jaw-bone of a martyr. “It appears not,” says Fleury, “that the heresy of Vigilantius gained ground, and that there was occasion for any council to condemn it.” It is true enough. His heresy slept till the Reformation awakened it; and since that time, all Protestants, all such, I mean, as have not renounced common sense, are of the same opinion about these things with Vigilantius.’ Jortin, vol. IV. p. 225.

40 The custom of keeping the lamps lighted in the day-time, now so common in Roman Catholic countries, prevailed in the churches both of the East and West. See Bingham’s *Antiq. of the Chr. Ch.* b. viii. ch. 6. sect. 21.

41 Faustus, an African prelate, who flourished according to Lardner in the year 384, in a book written in defence of the Manichæans, speaks of the orthodox, that is to say of the greater part of Christians, in the following terms. ‘You have substituted your *Agapæ* to the sacrifices of the Pagans, and to *their* idols *your* martyrs, whom you serve with the very same honors. You appease the shades of the dead with wine and feasts; you celebrate the solemn festivals of the Gentiles, their calends and their solstices; and as to their manners, those you have retained without any alteration. *Nothing* distinguishes you from the Pagans, except that you hold your assemblies apart from them.’ Jortin, vol. II. p. 57. In these charges, says Dr. Jortin, there is somewhat of falshood and exaggera-

persons first arose, 'who worshipped the Blessed Virgin as a goddess, and judged it necessary to appease her anger, and seek her favor and protection, by libations, sacrifices, and oblations.'

With respect to fasting, 'it was considered, in this century, as the most effectual and powerful means of repelling the force, and disconcerting the stratagems, of evil spirits, and of appeasing the anger of an offended Deity. Hence we may easily understand what induced the rulers of the church to establish this custom by express laws, and to impose, as an indispensable duty<sup>42</sup>, an act of humiliation; the observation of which had *hitherto* been left to every one's choice.' The *mode* of fasting became also essentially different. 'Formerly those who submitted themselves to the discipline of fasting abstained from meat and drink; but now a mere abstinence from flesh and wine was by many judged sufficient for the purposes of fasting, and this latter opinion prevailed, from this time, and became universal among the Latins.—The quadragesimal or lent fast was held more sacred than all the rest, though it was not as yet confined to a certain number of days.'

The example of those who introduced into Mesopotamia and Syria the practice of monastic retirement, 'was followed with such rapid success, that, in a short time, the whole East was filled with a lazy set of mortals, who abandoning all human connections, advantages, pleasures, and concerns, wore out a languishing life amidst the hardships of want, and various kinds of suffering, in order to arrive at a more close and rapturous communion with God and angels.—From the East this gloomy institution passed into

tion; but at the same time 'it must be confessed that there is also some truth, and that paganism had already begun to enter along with the Pagans into the church,' On the degree of credit which is due to the allegations of Faustus, M. de Beausobre has treated at great length and in a masterly manner. *Histoire du Manichéisme*, tom. II. p. 629—700.

42 Men, however, were not to fast, but when the church pleased. The council of Gangra, convened about the year 370, in their 18th canon, anathematizes him who presumes to keep a fast on a Sunday.

the West, and first into Italy and its neighboring islands ; and thence it ‘ extended gradually its progress through the other provinces and countries of Europe<sup>43</sup>.—If the enthusiastic frenzy of the monks exaggerated, in a manner pernicious to the interests of morality, the discipline that is obligatory upon Christians ; the interests of virtue and true religion suffered yet more grievously by two monstrous errors which were almost UNIVERSALLY adopted in this century, and became a source of innumerable calamities and mischiefs in the succeeding ages. The first of these maxims was, that *it was an act of virtue, to deceive and lye, when by that means the interests of the church might be promoted* ; and the second equally horrible, though in another point of view, was, that *errors in religion, when maintained and adhered to after proper admonition, were punishable with civil penalties and corporal tortures.*’

With respect to the days, set apart for the commemoration of the martyrs, days which were so extravagantly mul-

43 It was in Egypt, and in the year 306, that monks were first collected into societies. But, ‘at the latter end of the 4th century, the number of Egyptian monks only, upon a moderate computation, is supposed to have been 76,000 ; and that of the nuns 21,000.—Constantine held in the highest veneration those who addicted themselves to the *divine philosophy* as it was called in those days, that is, to monkery ; and the holy women who preserved a perpetual virginity, these he almost adored. So says Eusebius, who was carried away himself with the torrent, and overvalued this strange way of life.’ Jovian, elected emperor in 363, decreed, that whosoever courted a nun, and enticed her to marriage, should be put to death. The council of Illiberis, assembled about the commencement of the fourth century, in its 33d canon, prescribes celibacy to *all* orders of clergy. ‘The Fathers of those times, as Athanasius, Gregory Nazianzen,’ (they both of them flourished and died in the 4th century) ‘and *who not*, but particularly Chrysostom with his popular eloquence, contributed, *to the utmost of their power*, to encourage the superstitious veneration and invocation of saints, the love of monkery, and the belief of miracles wrought by monks and reliques.’ The manner in which Jeron extolled celibacy and depressed matrimony was, says Jortin, fanatical and scandalous ; and ‘Ambrose, in his zeal for virginity, exhorted girls to enter into the monastic state, even against the will of their parents.’ Jortin, vol. II. 2d ed. p. 156, 169 ; vol. IV. 1st ed. p. 18, 37, 104, 118, 168.

tiplied, they were squandered away in indolence and in *voluptuousness*. Indeed 'the number of immoral and unworthy Christians began so to increase, that the examples of real piety and virtue became *extremely rare*<sup>44</sup>.—When MOST OF THE BISHOPS exhibited to their flock the contagious examples of arrogance<sup>45</sup>, luxury, effeminacy, animosity, and strife, with other vices too numerous to mention<sup>46</sup>; when the inferior rulers and doctors of the church

44 'Gregory of Nyssa went to Jerusalem, to try whether he could pacify the quarrels there amongst the Christians. He tells us, that instead of finding the virtues which might have been expected from the inhabitants of the Holy Land, he found the place to be a sink of iniquity and debauchery, the seat of envy, malice, adultery, robbery, murder, idolatry, poisoning, and bloodshed, where men assassinated others for a trifling reward, so that in no place were murders so frequently and so easily committed. Such were the Christians of Jerusalem in the 4th century, a century so abundant in saints and miracles! Jortin, vol. IV. p. 69.

45 The bishops were no less servile than they were arrogant. Dr. Jortin, speaking of Constantius and the numerous prelates who composed the council of Rimini, says, 'the compliments paid to the emperor by these bishops were really scandalous.—It is strange that Christian emperors of the fourth and fifth centuries would suffer themselves to be called *Your Eternity, Your Divinity, Your Godship*.' vol. IV. p. 4. But they did not merely suffer this. The title *nostrum numen* Honorius and Theodosius did themselves impiously assume; whilst *nostra divinitas* and *nostrum divinum præceptum* were expressions employed by Theodosius and Valentinian. Vossius *de IdololatRIA*, lib. iii. c. 17.

46 'Amongst the causes which made Gregory (Nazianzen) desirous of declining the office of a bishop or of a presbyter, he mentions the mean and scandalous manner by which many, unworthy as they were, endeavored to acquire those stations, and the multitude of competitors for ecclesiastical preferments. They consider this dignity, says he, not as a station wherein they ought to be a pattern of every virtue, but as a trade to get money; not as a ministry and a stewardship, of which an account must be given, but as a magistracy subject to no examination.' Le Clerc as quoted and translated by Jortin. Sulpitius Severus, who was himself a priest, and published an ecclesiastical history about the close of the 4th century, bestows 'a bad character upon MOST of the prelates of his time,' and censures 'their scandalous contentions and their vile practices.' Jortin, vol. IV. p. 90, 98. Scarcely have the most profligate of the Roman pontiffs, in any period, betrayed a greater want of decency in oppressing those who have been committed to their pastoral care, than George of Cappadocia, who was archbishop of Alexandria in the reign of Constantius.



fell into a slothful and approbrious negligence of the duties of their respective stations, and employed in vain wranglings and idle disputes, that zeal and attention, that were due to the culture of piety and to the instruction of their people ; and when (to complete the enormity of this horrid detail) multitudes were drawn into the profession of Christianity, not by the power of conviction and argument, but by the prospect of gain and the fear of punishment : then it was, indeed, no wonder that the church was contaminated with shoals of profligate Christians, and that *the virtuous few* were, in a manner, oppressed and *overwhelmed* with the superior numbers of the wicked and licentious.'

Such is the account, which one of the most eminent of ecclesiastical historians has given us of the corruptions and vices of the Fourth Century ; and hence does it appear, that almost all the superstitions, which many apprehend to have been *introduced* into the world by the priesthood of the Romish hierarchy, so far from being peculiar to them, were in reality established, and had obtained the most ample encouragement, before that hierarchy was formed.

On the worst and blackest feature of the man of sin, I mean his intolerant and persecuting spirit, little has hitherto been said. From what follows it will however appear, that, in the ecclesiastical transactions of the 4th century, it was very conspicuous and prominent. When we reflect, that the compulsory mode of opposing speculative errors was new among the followers of Jesus, and first employed by Constantine ; when it is remembered, that at that time Christians were accustomed to peruse the precepts of mildness and mercy, which are recorded in the New Testament,

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Mr. Gibbon speaking of his arrival at that city, and of his succeeding to a rival prelate, says, ' the entrance of the new archbishop was that of a barbarian conquerer ; and each moment of his reign was polluted by cruelty and avarice.—He oppressed with an impartial hand the various inhabitants of his extensive diocese.' In particular ' the merchants of Alexandria were impoverished by the unjust, and almost universal, monopoly, which he acquired, of nitre, salt, paper, funerals, &c.' vol. IV. p. 126.

and which were inculcated by our Lord and his apostles ; when it is recollected, that they had themselves recently felt all the severity of Pagan persecution, had witnessed its inefficacy to accomplish the purpose it was intended to effect, and had seen, in the writings of the most celebrated defenders of the Christian faith, as in those of Tertullian and Lactantius<sup>47</sup>, the folly and wickedness of persecution demonstrated with the greatest energy of expression and cogency of argument ; the mind, which has imbibed the genuine spirit of the gospel, cannot but be struck with indignation and surprise, when beholding the height to which intolerance attained, and the extent to which persecution was carried, in the reigns of Constantine and of his immediate successors. The Christians, says Lardner, who persecuted, were self-condemned. ‘ If it was reasonable, that they should be tolerated and protected by heathen emperors ; much more was it reasonable and evident, that all other sects of Christians should be tolerated and protected by that sect, which happened to be the most numerous and powerful<sup>48</sup>.’

Among all the Fathers of the fourth century, there was not, in the opinion of Le Clerc, a worthier man than Gregory Nazianzen ; and a part of the testimony, which he has left us of the spirit of his own times, is as follows. He declares, ‘ that the pulpits were filled with illiterate pastors, with mere boys, with imitators of the scribes and pharisees ; that there was no such thing as charity among them, but only acrimony and wrath ; that their religion *consisted* in condemning the irreligion of others, whose behaviour they watched, not to reform them, but to defame them ; that they blamed or praised persons, not for their bad or good lives, but according to the party to which they belonged, admiring in one what they reviled in another.’ Le Clerc, after recapitulating these and other particulars, adds, ‘ this is a faithful portrait of the ecclesiastics in the days of

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47 See Lardner's works, vol. IV. p. 51—56.

48 Vol. IV. p. 200.

Gregory, as the history of those times too plainly shews<sup>49.</sup> That the bishops of this century assumed the same anti-christian dominion over the conscience, as the Roman pontiffs afterwards did, the transactions of the council of Nice are sufficient to evince; which council consisted of nearly 300 prelates, and was held in the presence of Constantine in the year 325. Their celebrated creed they concluded with anathematising all 'who say that there was a time when the Son of God was not, and that before he was begotten he was not<sup>50.</sup>'

A few facts relative to the treatment of the Jews shall next be given. The council of Illiberis<sup>51</sup>, which was convened about the commencement of the 4th century, ordains that those who eat with a Jew shall be separated from the church. Before that time, a friendly intercourse subsisted between the Jews and the Christians of Spain<sup>52</sup>. That those who became proselytes to Judaism should be punished, was a decree of Constantine; and he empowered the judges, if they thought proper, to deliver them over to the executioner<sup>53</sup>. In the reign of his son Constantius, a Jew was prohibited from marrying a Christian on the the penalty of death<sup>54</sup>. A Christian bishop had burnt a Jewish synagogue. Ambrose, made bishop of Milan A. D. 374, zealously defended this outrage in a letter to the emperor, and declaimed on the unlawfulness of rebuilding the synagogue. Accordingly the incendiaries were exempted from making restitution<sup>55</sup>. But however bitter and widely diffused the animosity against the descendants of Abraham might be,

49 See Jortin, vol. IV. p. 95, 99.

50 Du Pin. Jortin, vol. II. p. 225.

51 In its 50th canon. The account of the canons of councils I have taken from the 2d and 3d volumes of that magnificent edition of the Councils, which, in the year 1644, was printed at the royal press of Paris in 37 volumes folio.

52 Basnage's *Hist. des Juifs*, VI. 14.

53 Bingham's *Antiq. of the Chr. Ch.* b. xvi. ch. 14.

54 Basnage's *Hist. des Juifs*, VI. 14.

55 Jortin, vol. II. p. 408, 411.

Jortin declares, that, in the 4th century, 'it was safer to be a Jew or a Pagan, than to be an heretic, or a schismatic, or a Christian of this or that denomination<sup>56</sup>.'

'The laws against heretics collected in the Theodosian code,' says this ingenious writer in another place, 'stand as a shameful monument of the persecuting antichristian spirit, which broke out in the fourth century<sup>57</sup>.' To Dr. Horsley, whom some suspect to have been raised successively to the sees of St. David's and Rochester, as a reward for his breathing a similar spirit, this must be a very delectable composition.

Heresy was regarded as the greatest of crimes. No one, says Chrysostom, ought to maintain any friendship with a heretic<sup>58</sup>. In many cases, heretics, previously to their being driven into banishment, were subjected to corporal punishment, and particularly to scourging<sup>59</sup>. Even those who entered into the monastic life, much as it was extolled, had no assurance of security, if tainted with heresy. In the year 363 a set of heretical and fanatic monks arose, called Messalians. 'The bishops,' says Jortin, 'cleared their dioceses of this vermin, by burning the monasteries into which they had gotten access, and by sending them all into banishment. An expeditious way, certainly, but not the most Christian way of illuminating these heretics<sup>60</sup>.'

Among the persecuted sects were the Arians, the Donatists, the Manicheans, and the Quartadecimans, of whom the last committed the heinous sin of celebrating Easter at a time, which the imperious council of Nice did not approve. Though 'the doctrine of the Donatists were conformable to that of the church, as even their adversaries confess;' yet Constantine, as Mosheim informs us, about the year 316, took from them their churches, banished

56 Vol. II. p. 392.

57 Vol. II. p. 303.

58 Homil. II. in Ephes.

59 Bingham's Antiq. of the Chr. Ch. b. xvi. ch. 6

60 Jortin, vol. IV. p. 40



their bishops, and *put some among them to death*; and after they had for a number of years been tolerated, the emperor Gratian, in the year 377, again ‘deprived them of their churches, and prohibited all their assemblies public and private<sup>61</sup>.’ They were excluded even from the right of entering into a contract, and incapacitated from buying and selling<sup>62</sup>. Audæus, who was at the head of the Quartadecimans, and a man of distinguished virtue, Constantine banished into Scythia; and Theodosius the great, not content with having forbidden this class of heretics from assembling together for the purpose of worshipping God, in one of his laws, disqualifies every individual among them from making a will, confiscates his goods, and renders him liable to capital punishment<sup>63</sup>. Constantine ‘banished Arius and the bishops who sided with him, and ordered the books of Arius to be burnt, and added, *if any man be found to have concealed a copy of these books, and not to have instantly produced it, and thrown it into the fire, he shall be put to death*<sup>64</sup>.’ But tyrannical as was the conduct of Constantine to the Arians, it was mild in comparison of that of Theodosius the Great. ‘He raised the secular arm against the Arians with a terrible degree of violence, drove them from their churches,’ and ‘enacted laws, whose severity exposed them to the greatest calamities<sup>65</sup>.’ With respect to the Manicheans, this prince ordered them to be driven out of Rome, rendered them incapable of receiving a legacy, and passed a law for the confiscation of their estates,

61 Vol. I. p. 330, 332, 333.

62 Bingham's Antiq. of the Chr. Ch. b. xvi. ch. 8.

63 Bingham's Antiq. in his Works, vol. II. p. 311. Mosheim, vol. I. p. 350.

64 Jortin, vol. II. p. 219. Constantine not only introduced the practice of persecuting heretics; but *the mode* of doing it which *afterwards* prevailed, that of burning them, seems to have derived its *origin* from him. ‘He appointed,’ says Jortin, ‘this punishment for *various* offences.—To burn men alive became thenceforward a very common punishment, to the disgrace of Christianity.’ Jortin, vol. II. p. 306.

65 Mosheim, vol. I. p. 341

which were not to revert to their children, unless the latter embraced the catholic faith<sup>66</sup>. Some years before this, the Nicenians, or the Orthodox themselves, were cruelly persecuted by the Arian emperor Valens. We are assured by Socrates, that, not content with expelling them from the churches of the East, he punished them in a variety of ways, imprisoning some and executing others. The historian adds, that by his command, and under the immediate direction of his præfect, fourscore ecclesiastics were conveyed on board a ship, and, the vessel being set on fire, were inhumanly burnt to death<sup>67</sup>.

Of the calamities sustained on account of religion by particular persons, I shall notice those alone, which were endured by some among the Priscillianists. About the year 385, Priscillian, bishop of Avila, a man of genius and eloquence, Latronian, a learned Spaniard, Euchrocia, a lady of Bourdeaux, Felicissimus, a presbyter, and three others of the same sentiments, were publicly executed at Treves as heretics, on the ground of charges brought forward by some worthless prelates, and under the sanction of the civil magistrate. ‘After the executions before-mentioned,’ I now quote from Dr. Lardner, ‘the emperor Maximus, at the instigation of the bishops whom he had about him, gave a commission to some tribunes with power of the sword to go into Spain, to make inquiry after these heretics, and to confiscate their goods, or put to death such as should be apprehended. This Martin<sup>68</sup> earnestly opposed, dreading the consequences, and at length prevented it. “Nor can there be any question made,” says Sulpicius<sup>69</sup>, “that if the commission had proceeded, it would have been fatal to multitudes of good men. For at that time little regard was had to men’s real characters: if a man looked pale, or

66 *Anc. Univ. Hist.* vol. xvi. p. 369, 426.

67 See *Socratis Hist. Eccl.* lib. iv. c. 15, 16, 17, 22.

68 The celebrated bishop of Tours, who was, says Lardner, a wise and a good man.

69 It is scarcely necessary to remind the reader, that Sulpicius Severus was a contemporary ecclesiastical historian.

was modest in his garb, it was reckoned a mark of heresy, and sufficient to cast him, without making any particular inquiry concerning his faith<sup>70</sup>."

But to narrate the sufferings of particular sects or particular men is almost a superfluous task. All who adopted not the metaphysical creed of the orthodox church were subjected to the violence of wicked persecutors. Constantine, says Jortin, 'made a law against *heretics*, by which he forbad them to have any conventicles, and to meet together in public or *in private* to perform acts of religion. This was mere insolent tyranny; and Eusebius deserves to be censured for having spoken favorably of it; and yet he is forced to own that it made many hypocritical conformists, and nominal catholics. A fine acquisition<sup>71</sup>!' When, says Lardner, the government of Constantine was firmly established, 'as Eusebius has assured us, the private assemblies of ALL heretics, Valentinians, Marcionites, Cataphrygians, and others were prohibited.—According to that edict, Tertullian, who in the time of the emperor Severus published so noble an apology for the Christian religion and its professors, could not have had liberty of public worship under a Christian emperor: no, according to law, he could not now, any more than in his own time, have joined with his friends in the worship of God, in the most private place whatever. In short, liberty was still given to those only who were of the emperor's religion<sup>72</sup>.' And in the year 381 (I am again quoting from the ingenious author of *Remarks on Ecclesiastical History*), 'Theodosius took away from ALL heretics and schismatics ALL their churches, and made a present of them to the orthodox<sup>73</sup>.' Theodosius also was 'the first prince who established an

70 Lardner's Works, vol. IV. p. 454—480.

71 Vol. II. p. 305. 'The two prevailing evils of this reign, as Eusebius owns, were avarice and hypocrisy. And for certain, authority and force in matters of a religious nature, will multiply hypocrites.' Lardner's Works, vol. IV. p. 182.

72 Vol. IV. p. 178.

73 The religious meetings of heretics, 'whether public or secret, by day or by night, in cities or in the country, were equally proscribed by the

Inquisition, a spiritual office.' It was 'the outrageous zeal of the ecclesiastics, their desire to domineer over men's consciences, and their inhumanity covered with the mask of orthodoxy, which *obliged* the emperors to trample under foot justice, benevolence, charity, and prudence, and totally to neglect the true interest of the public, that they might gratify the ceaseless opportunity of the persecutors<sup>74</sup>.' To most of the emperors this observation may be justly applied; but not to Constantine. To lessen the infamy of his persecutions, it cannot be alleged, that *he* was in any degree *compelled* to carry them on, or that he passed his days under the fear of ecclesiastics.

In the latter part of the 4th century persecution was also let loose against the Pagans. 'If a sacrifice was offered up in a private place, with the knowledge of the owner, the place was to be confiscated. If not, twenty-five pounds weight of gold was to be paid; and the penalty was the same for a sacrifice offered in a temple. If any one consulted the entrails of a victim, to discover future events, it was high treason.' In the pillage and demolition of the temples the monks 'were the dragoons usually employed.—We have an oration of Libanius in behalf of the temples, in which the Pagan orator acts the same part before Theodosius, as the Christian apologists had acted before Pagan emperors<sup>75</sup>.' Surely in this part of the 4th century, the genuine religion of Jesus cannot be supposed in any degree to have prevailed in the hearts of those who entitled themselves his disciples, when they applauded, and almost universally applauded, transactions thus decidedly antichristian.

Intolerant as the church of Rome has been, it may with truth be asserted, that even she, in the periods of her

edicts of Theodosius; and the building or ground, which had been used for that illegal purpose, was forfeited to the imperial domain.' Gibbon, vol. V. p. 32.

<sup>74</sup> Jortin, vol. IV. p. 100, 143.

<sup>75</sup> Jortin, vol. IV. p. 145, 146.



greatest prosperity and arrogance, allowed a wider latitude of belief and disputation, than the prelates of the latter part of the 4th century. I am aware, that this may appear an extraordinary assertion; an assertion which runs counter to the prejudices which protestants have been wont to imbibe. But let an inquiry be made into the fact; and to the following citation let due attention be paid. ‘In the Theodosian code<sup>76</sup>, it is said, that ‘*they* are comprised under the denomination of heretics, and subject to *the punishments* imposed on such, who are found to deviate even an hair’s breadth from the catholic church.—What a vile oppressive law! what an everlasting source of calumny, and of vexatious and scandalous informations<sup>77</sup>!’ are the exclamations which naturally fall from Jortin after reciting the law.

Macedonius, archbishop of Constantinople in the reign of Constantius, was more than usually violent in compelling men to subscribe to the creed of the court. To enable him to effect this design, ‘the civil and military powers were directed to obey his commands;’ and ‘the sacraments of the church,’ says Mr. Gibbon<sup>78</sup>, ‘were administered to the reluctant victims, who denied the vocation, and abhorred the principles, of Macedonius. The rites of baptism were conferred on women and children, who, for that purpose, had been torn from the arms of their friends and parents; the mouths of the communicants were held open by a wooden engine, while the consecrated bread was forced down their throats; the breasts of tender virgins were either burnt with red-hot egg-shells, or inhumanly compressed between sharp and heavy boards. The principal assistants of Macedonius, in the work of persecution, were the two bishops of Nicomedia and Cyzicus.’

Every honest man is accustomed to express his indignation at the barbarous policy adopted by the court of Rome,

<sup>76</sup> L. XVI. Tit. V. p. 144.

<sup>77</sup> Vol. IV. p. 148.

<sup>78</sup> Vol. III. p. 369.

when its emissaries desolated the towns of the Albigenses, and endeavored to extirpate heresy by the torch and the sword. But their conduct was by no means unprecedented. Of those who styled themselves the followers of Jesus in the fourth century, some blushed not to be the authors of similar outrages. Macedonius<sup>79</sup>, being informed that a large district of Paphlagonia was almost entirely inhabited by the Novatians, who refused to profess his peculiar tenets, 'resolved either to convert or to extirpate them; and as he distrusted, on this occasion, the efficacy of an ecclesiastical mission, he commanded a body of four thousand legionaries to march against the rebels, and to reduce the territory of Mantinium under his spiritual dominion. The Novatian peasants, animated by despair and religious fury, boldly encountered the invaders of their country; and though many of the Paphlagonians were slain, the Roman legions were vanquished by an irregular multitude, armed only with scythes and axes; and, except a few who escaped by an ignominious flight, four thousand soldiers were left dead on the field of battle. The successor of Constantius has expressed, in a concise but lively manner, some of the theological calamities which afflicted the empire, and more especially the East, in the reign of a prince who was the slave of his own passions, and of those of his eunuchs. Many were imprisoned, and persecuted, and driven into exile. Whole troops of those who are called heretics were massacred, particularly at Cyzicus, and at Samosata. In Paphlagonia, Bithynia, Galatia, and in many other pro-

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79 The manner in which he obtained power corresponded to the manner in which he used it. As the claims and the principles of Macedonius were odious to the citizens of Constantinople, he was surrounded with troops of guards with drawn swords, as he passed through the streets of that capital in order to be consecrated. 'The military procession advanced towards the cathedral; the Arians and the Catholics eagerly rushed to occupy that important post; and 3150 persons lost their lives in the confusion of the tumult. Macedonius, who was supported by a regular force, obtained a decisive victory.' Gibbon, vol. III p. 394.

vinces, towns and villages were laid waste, and utterly destroyed<sup>80</sup>."

When all that has been stated is considered; and it is moreover recollected, that superstition, and profligacy, and spiritual tyranny, continued to gain ground, and to become *yet* more firmly established, during the 5th, the 6th, and the 7th centuries; the impartial and dispassionate inquirer cannot I think but be of opinion, that bp. Newton<sup>81</sup>, when he insinuated that the man of sin was not fully manifested before the 8th century, has given sanction to an error, which admits of the clearest confutation. That a prelate, of such sagacity and historic research, should have countenanced a statement so palpably erroneous, needs not however awaken surprise; for he plainly perceived, that the admission of the contrary opinion would draw after it consequences, which prudence would recommend to be kept out of sight, as being unwelcome and inconvenient to every advocate of every hierarchy. If the prophecy of the man of sin be once admitted to be of general application; if it can be satisfactorily proved from ecclesiastical history, that the terms of this prophecy correspond not only to the Roman pontiffs, but that it was also exactly fulfilled, prior to the acknowledgement of their supremacy<sup>82</sup>, in *many different* places, and by *many different persons*; there will certainly be strong reasons for suspecting, that neither can those churches be unconcerned in the fulfilment of the apostolic prediction, which, in later times, have not only

80 Julian. Epistol. LII. p. 436. edit. Spanheim.

81 Himself an advocate and enforcer of persecution, bp. Newton was not likely to be much shocked by the intolerant practices of the 4th, the 5th, the 6th, and the 7th centuries. In proof of the charge which I here bring forward against the prelate, I appeal to his own Works (see his *Life*, p. 88), and to the conclusion of ch. xiv.

82 'In the fourth century,' says Dr. Apthorp, 'the bishop of Rome had only the rank of a metropolitan over his own province within the limits of 100 miles from Rome: he derived his rank from the imperial city, but was not superior to other metropolitans, was not the patriarch of all the western churches, much less the monarch of the Christian world.' *Serp.* vol. II. p. 193.

asserted the same impious claims over the conscience and the thoughts, as the churches of Rome and Antioch and Constantinople have done, but have likewise imitated in their established constitution the former of those apostate churches, and derived from her their articles and creeds, their discipline and ceremonies.

I shall conclude the appendix with some admirable observations of one of the most fair, candid, and unprejudiced writers that ever lived. When superadded to the facts already stated, they are, I think, sufficient to decide the question before proposed: Did that much applauded prince, Constantine the great, *upon the whole render service to the cause of Christianity?* ‘If,’ says Dr. Lardner, ‘you make use of any methods, besides those of rational arguments, to induce men to profess and act as you desire, you do what lies in *your* power to make them lie and pervaricate. So did’ the ‘council of Nice.’ This council ‘introduced authority and force in the church, and the affairs of religion. Or, *if* authority *had* been introduced before, they now openly countenanced it, and gave it a farther sanction. This way of acting may be supposed to have been the chief cause of the ruin of the Christian interest in the East. This and the like determinations of speculative doctrines, and the violent methods, by which they were enforced, may be reckoned to have paved the way for Mahometanism, more than any thing else. By these means ignorance, and hypocrisy, and tedious rituals, came to take place of honesty, true piety, and undissembled, spiritual and reasonable worship and devotion. In about 300 years after the ascension of Jesus, without the aids of secular power, or church authority, the Christian religion spread over a large part of Asia, Europe, and Africa: and at the accession of Constantine, and convening the council of Nice, it was almost *every where, throughout those countries*, in a flourishing condition. In the space of another 300 years, or a little more, the beauty of the Christian religion was greatly corrupted in a large part of that extent, its glory defaced, and its light almost extinguished.



What can this be so much owing to, as to the determinations and transactions of the council of Nice, and the measures then set on foot, and followed in succeeding times? These impositions poison the waters of the sanctuary at the very fountain. They require the ministers of Christ, the officers of his church, to subscribe certain articles upon pain of heavy forfeitures: and a subscription to these articles, whether believed or not, gives a right to preferment. If any subscribe what they are not satisfied about, and so enter into the service of the church (which is very likely to happen), they gain and hold their offices by the tenor of hypocrisy. How *can* religion flourish in this way? Will the persons, who have so subscribed (without conviction or against it), be sincere and upright ever afterwards? Will they, upon all other occasions, speak the truth without fear or favor, who have once solemnly and deliberately prevaricated? And can others entirely confide in them; or can they heartily reverence them, as upright and disinterested men<sup>83</sup>.?

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## CHAPTER XIII.

### ON THE SYMBOLIC BABYLON.

THE prophecies, which relate to the symbolic Babylon, constitute far too extensive a portion of the Apocalypse to be completely and minutely considered in the present work. To some of them, I am, however, induced to direct the attention of the reader, not only on account of their connection with the subject of the last chapter, but because I am persuaded, that attentively to examine all this class of St. John's predictions is to become possessed of a testimony to the truth of Christianity, which admits not of being

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83 Lardner's Works, Vol. IV. p. 196.

undermined. Since the Apocalypse was mentioned by Irenæus, Tertullian, and Justin Martyr, by Theophilus of Antioch and Clement of Alexandria, writers who flourished in the second century; the infidel must confess, however reluctantly, that this work is a genuine production of the first or the second century. If then the book of Revelation does foretell (as in truth it does) a multitude of events, altogether unlike to what had hitherto happened among mankind, altogether inscrutable to human sagacity, but which have indisputably been accomplished since the expiration of the second century; if, though written when Rome was the capital of the heathen world, it does point out, amid a crowd of other circumstances, the luxury and splendor, the massacres and superstitions, of a prosperous and a persecuting church, which would extend its usurpations over the countries of the European world, and, establishing its principal seat at Rome, would form an intimate alliance with their respective sovereigns; this part of the New Testament must of consequence be admitted to be of divine original, Jesus Christ must of consequence be acknowledged to have been commissioned from heaven.

That by *Babylon* Rome is particularly signified, though not Rome modern, is admitted even by the Romanists themselves, as by those learned jesuits, Alcasar, Ribera, and Cornelius a Lapide, and those yet more celebrated adherents of the papacy, the cardinals Bellarmine and Baroni-  
 us. On the extent of signification, which belongs to the *whore of Babylon*, I am aware that commentators are not agreed. By all protestant interpreters it is, however, maintained, that the church of Rome is either *solely intended*, or is *included in the prophetic description*. To be convinced of this, it will be sufficient to read the xviith ch. of St. John, whence the following striking passages are extracted.

*And I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet-colored Beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and Ten Horns. And the woman was arrayed in purple, and scarlet color, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations.—Upon*

her forehead was a name written, *Mystery, Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots, and abominations of the earth. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration. And the angel said unto me, wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the Beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and Ten Horns.—The seven heads are seven mountains<sup>1</sup> on which the woman sitteth.—And the Ten Horns which thou sawest are Ten Kings, which have received no kingdom as yet. And the woman which thou sawest is that great City, which reigneth over the kings of the earth<sup>2</sup>.*

Let the Christian, whose faith is sometimes clouded by doubt and embarrassed by objection, reflect on these words; and, when he reflects, no longer suffer his confidence in the divine original of his religion to be darkened with uncertainty. Let the most careless and the most credulous infidel ask himself, whilst he pursues this prediction, whether it be possible, that an enthusiast or impostor of the first or the second century, (for he must himself allow the Apocalypse to have been written at least within this period,) could have drawn, by *mere chance*, a portraiture, so exactly suitable to the church of Rome, although, in the two first centuries of the Christian æra, nothing had existed in the world, which bore to it the faintest resemblance.

‘A *nuntius*, angel, or interpreter,’ says Mr. Lowman, ‘was a known part in the ancient drama. Here an angel is sent to interpret this part of the prophecy to us; and we may justly look upon the angel’s interpretation as a sure

1 It is immediately added in the following verse, and there are seven kings, i. e. seven successive forms of government; for the seven heads, as Mede and bp. Hurd observe, ‘are a double type.’

2 ‘Words,’ says bp. Hurd, ‘cannot be more determinate than these.—There is no possibility of evading the force of these terms.’ Vol. II. p. 146. In the 14th century they were applied to papal Rome, closely and pointedly, by Petrarch. Opera, Bas, 1581, Epist. lib. sine titulo, Ep. xvi. p. 729.

key, which will warrant an application of the several representations.' How an idolatrous community came to be denoted under the symbol of an *harlot*, Dr. Lancaster has stated at large; having previously observed, that 'cities are frequently represented in the prophets under the type of women,—virgins, wives, widows, and harlots<sup>3</sup>, according to their different conditions.' '*A woman sitting upon a beast*,' says bp. Newton, 'is a lively and significant emblem of a church or city directing and governing an empire. In painting and sculpture, as well as in prophetic language, cities are often represented in the form of women: and Rome herself is exhibited in ancient coins as a woman sitting upon a lion.' The Babylonish harlot appeared to be *arrayed in purple and scarlet color<sup>4</sup>, and decked with gold*; i. e. observes Mr. Waple, she 'was a pompous and worldly church, full of pride and riches.' This signified, says Mr. Pyle, how much she 'would aspire after temporal riches, as well as spiritual dominion. In her hand she held a golden cup, filled with such delicious liquor as prostitutes were wont to give their lovers, to inflame their vicious desires: to denote the fair and specious pretences, the false and alluring methods, whereby this corrupt church was to draw mankind into idolatrous worship, which is called spiritual fornication. In this excellent little book of morality, called *Cebes's Table*, there is the like figure of Error and Imposture,—*a fair, beautiful, false woman, with a cup in her hand, that seduces mankind*.' 'The very metal of the cup,' says Dr. More, 'has a natural magic with it to draw and allure men to her, and at a distance to intoxicate the brains of their clergy with the fumes of ambition and covetousness.' At the sight of this spectacle St. John wondered with great admiration. 'To find a Power professedly Christian, drunk with the blood of the saints, might,' says Mr. Pyle, 'well astonish him.'

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3 Jerusalem (Is. i. 21), Tyre (Is. xxiii. 16), Nineveh (Nah. iii. 4), and Semaria (Ezek. xxiii. 5) are all styled harlots.

4 That *scarlet* is a very favorite color with prebendaries and prelates, cardinals and pontiffs, is a fact of sufficient notoriety.



As we are informed by the angel of the vision, that *the seven heads on which the woman sat are seven mountains*, and that *the woman herself is that great city, which, in the time of St. John, reigned over the kings of the earth*: we are directed to look to the city and hierarchy of ROME, as to the most successful promoter of clerical tyranny, and the chief seat of the antichristian church, from the bosom of which most of the other hierarchies have sprung: as to that ecclesiastical establishment of mighty influence, which all, of them, however, denominated, have copied with a greater or less degree of faithfulness; and from which some of them have borrowed their system of government and long gradation of ranks; their dogmatism of spirit, and claims of authority over the conscience; their maxims of policy, their form of worship, and principal articles of faith; their compulsory mode of collecting revenue, their readiness to sound aloud the charge of heresy and schism, and their zeal in inflicting penalties of civil disability. It is Rome, says a learned member of the English church, that ‘all the other parts of Christendom have imitated, either as a sister-city, which was the case of Constantinople, or as daughters, which is the condition of all the rest.’ ‘This interpretation of the angel,’ says Mr. Lowman, ‘leaves no room to doubt, but that the persecuting power here prophesied of was to be some empire, of which the city of Rome was to be the capital or seat. Rome was as well known by its situation on seven hills or *montes*, as by the name of Rome itself; *Urbs septicollis* was never mistaken for any other city, Roman authors have so fully determined the sense of it.’ In proof of this, an appeal might be made to Horace and Virgil, to Propertius and Ovid.

Sed, quæ de septem totum circumspicit orbem  
 Montibus, inperii Roma Deumque locus,  
 are the words of Ovid; and Horace, in his *Carmen Secu-*

*larc*, appears to regard the expression of *septem colles* as altogether synonymous with *Roma*.

Dis, quibus septem placuere colles.

‘And what city,’ asks bp. Newton, ‘at the time of the vision, *reigned over the kings of the earth*, but Rome?’ It, however, by no means follows, because this description of the prophets has so perfect a resemblance to the Romish hierarchy, that we are to *restrict* the interpretation of it to her, if it be indeed true, that there are other churches distinguished by the same fatal marks. And even those, who regard this prophetic personage as *exclusively* emblematic of Rome, will, when they perceive in v. 5, that she is called *Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots*, still perhaps be of opinion, that there are other smaller Babylons and false churches, which tread in her steps, and retain many of her spurious doctrines, though they may prudently have endeavored to throw a veil over their likeness to her, and studiously have shunned all open intercourse with her.

It deserves to be noted, that this sumptuously-dressed WOMAN, stigmatized with the name of *Babylon the Great*, is sometimes represented under a different emblem, and called *the great city Babylon*. That they refer to the same antitype all admit. The propriety of the name, *Babylon*, (were it necessary) might be evinced; and it might be shewn, as it actually has been, in what various respects the antichristian church in general, and that of Rome in particular, resembles that ancient seat of tyranny, and persecutor of the children of Israel. ‘That this *city Babylon* is not a city of brick and stone, but a polity, and *particularly* the Roman hierarchy, I have, says Dr. More, ‘evidently proved in my Joint-Exposition<sup>6</sup>.’ That it has this extensive import is indeed demonstrable, because the Babylonish woman appeared to St. John, in his prophetic vision (v. 1) as *sitting upon many waters*, and the words of the interpreting angel are (v. 15), *the waters which thou sawest*,

where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues. She is, says Dr. More in allusion to this symbol, 'a water-nymph, whose skirts are so large, that she has sat floating upon the whole Imperial ocean for these many ages<sup>7</sup>.' This learned writer also observes, that it is remarked by Grotius and by the Jesuits Alcasar and Cornelius a Lapide<sup>8</sup>, that the symbolic *waters* signify 'the universal extent of the Roman empire<sup>9</sup>.' In consistency with this Dr. More admits, that Babylon is not to be understood solely of the church of Rome<sup>10</sup>; and declares, that it comprehends 'the whole body of the idolatrous clergy throughout the Roman empire<sup>11</sup>.' But to give any farther statements respecting the extensive signification of the apocalyptic Babylon will not here be necessary, as in the next chapter the subject will be resumed.

So long has the antichristian power in the Apocalypse been regarded as completely applicable to the papal usurpation in particular, that it would probably be vain to inquire, from what quarter the opinion originated. Its origin it might possibly derive from the words of a Roman pontiff, from Gregory the Great, who, in the 6th century, writing to the bishop of Constantinople, and disputing his claims, says, 'I affirm it confidently, that whoever styles himself *Universal Bishop*, or is solicitous for the title, by this elation of heart, proves himself to be the forerunner of Antichrist.' A council, held in the 10th century at the city of Rheims, Arnulph, bishop of Orleans, thus addressed, whilst he spoke

7 Myst. of Iniq. p. 306.

8 Lewis d'Alcasar was a celebrated Jesuit of the 16th cent. a native of Seville, who, for almost 20 years, wholly bent his attention to the study of the Apocalypse; and to this prophecy the whole of his two volumes in folio have either an immediate or indirect reference. But Cornelius a Lapide was a yet more voluminous commentator. His annotations on scripture occupy no less than ten volumes in folio. *Moreri. Bayle.*

9 Myst. of Iniq. p. 306. The '*waters you saw the woman sitting upon*, i. e. ruling over, are the people of the several European countries.' Mr. Pyle's Paraph.

10 Myst. of Iniq. p. 365.

11 Myst. of Iniq. p. 276.

of the reigning pontiff. ‘What think ye, reverend Fathers, of this man, elevated on a lofty throne, and glittering in gold and purple? Whom do ye account him to be? Surely, if destitute of charity, and elated with the pride of science alone, he is Antichrist, *sitting in the temple of God, and shewing himself that he is God.*’ ‘That the *Beast* in the Apocalypse occupied the chair of St. Peter,’ was the declaration of St. Bernard<sup>12</sup>, abbot of Clairvaux in Champagne, who, in the 12th century, founded 160 monasteries; and whilst he saw his admonitions respectfully listened to by princes and by pontiffs, was obeyed by the nations of Europe, when he summoned them to the defence of the holy sepulchre. By another famous abbot, Joachim of Calabria, similar sentiments were advanced. Richard I. of England, when spending his winter at Messina, and in his way to Palestine, sent for him to hear him interpret the prophetic visions of St. John: and the abbot then maintained, ‘that Antichrist was already born in the city of Rome, and would be elevated to the apostolical chair.’ So far from being offended by his discourse, the king and his courtiers, as we are told by a contemporary annalist of the 12th century, listened to him with a high degree of pleasure. But this adaptation of prophecy was not confined to *these* or to other *celebrated* individuals that might be specified. The Waldenses and Albigenses, so renowned for their numbers, their virtues, and the purity of their faith, taught, in the 12th and 13th centuries, that the pope was Antichrist, and the church of Rome the Babylon of the Apocalypse<sup>13</sup>. This opinion, as

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12 One day on his entering into church, an image of the Virgin Mary apparently saluted him with ‘Good morrow, Bernard;’ but the abbot of Clairvaux, instead of receiving so flattering a compliment with the civility of a devotee, replied to her sharply, ‘that her Ladyship had forgotten both herself and her sex, for that it was not permitted to women to speak in the church.’ 1 Tim. ii. 12. See this story related in a small treatise on Antichrist (p. 51), now scarce and unknown, by Christopher Ness, printed in 1679.

13 Such, says Vitringa, was the language of pious men in general, during the whole of the four centuries which preceded the Reformation. In Apoc. p. 749.



well as others maintained by them, was felt to be so deeply founded in scripture, that the papal plunderers, in order to preserve their authority, exerted against them all their power and exhausted all their cruelty.

These early interpretations of prophecy I have been rather tempted to introduce, not only because they are remarkable in themselves, not only because they proceeded from eminent men, but because their genuineness is unquestioned, as they are either extant in their own works, or are recorded by celebrated writers of the Roman Catholic communion<sup>14</sup>.

Hitherto I have been speaking of the xviith chapter. In the 2d v. of the xviiiith, the destruction of the figurative Babylon is solemnly announced ; and an angel is represented as *crying mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the Great is fallen, is fallen.* A few verses farther it is declared (v. 8), that *her plagues shall come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine*<sup>15</sup>. ‘The pomp and splendor,’ says Mr. Pyle, ‘the plenty and extravagance, the artifices and delusions, that have accompanied this false religion and worship, shall end in shame, poverty, and disgrace’<sup>16</sup>.

Three of the intervening verses (v. 4, 5, and 6) are justly thought to implicate a strong censure and a solemn threatening against all persons and all nations, who, in the period of its decline, shall in any way assist the cause of Antichrist, or attempt to arrest the certain downfall of the antichristian church. *And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, COME OUT OF HER, MY PEOPLE, THAT YE BE NOT*

14 The declaration of Gregory, the most respected of all the popes, may be seen in his 30th Epistle, lib. vi. (*Opera*, Par. 1518, fol. 398); that of the abbot of Clairvaux in his 125th. For the testimony of Arnulph, delivered at the council of Rheims, and as bp. Newton erroneously supposed by Gerbert, the archbishop of that city, see Baronius (in Ann. 992, vol. X. p. 863); for that of the Calabrian abbot, consult *Rogeri de Hoveden Annales, inter quinque Scriptores.* Edit. Franc. 1601, p. 681.

15 There will be *mourning and famine*; i. e. says Dr. More, ‘grief of heart, with scarcity and poverty to requite their luxury before.’

16 P. 155.

PARTAKERS OF HER SINS, AND THAT YE RECEIVE NOT OF HER PLAGUES. *For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double, according to her works : in the cup which she hath filled fill to her double.* ‘ I take the word *double*,’ says Daubuz, ‘ in all such cases to signify vastly great,’ and of this force of the word he alleges many specimens from classical authors<sup>17</sup>. ‘ The Papists seem to me,’ says Mr. Evanson, ‘ to reason very justly when they conclude, if the words *come out of her, my people*, &c. lay Christians under an obligation to separate from the apostate church ; the words *reward her as she hath rewarded you*, &c. lay them under an equal obligation, as far as is in their power, to endeavor her extirpation. At the same time it is evidently impossible that they, who are really actuated by the spirit of that amiable religion, which breathes nothing but benevolence and love towards all mankind, should be guilty of revenge, or treat any of their erring fellow-creatures with that unfeeling cruelty and inhuman hardness of heart, with which the intolerant zeal of antichristianism hath, at all times, inspired its bigotted votaries. But it is by no means requisite that similar ends should always be effected by similar means. The utter destruction of the antichristian church, and the offering personal violence to any of its members, are very distinct things ; and the latter is far from being, in the least degree, necessarily implied in the former<sup>18</sup>.’ Another writer, alike distinguished by the depth of his learning, and his independent spirit, after quoting the first of these verses, says, ‘ if, upon deliberate examination, we should unexpectedly find ourselves engaged in the service of Antichrist, instead of the ministry of the Lord Jesus ; it is our duty, as we value the favor of God himself and our own everlasting happiness, to return, at every hazard, to the profession of evangelical truth and purity. Our Saviour him-

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<sup>17</sup> Vid. *διπλος* in Scapula.

<sup>18</sup> Let. to Hurd, p. 131.

self has laid down the alternate of our conduct in very plain language. Hear HIM; and consider which ye will choose. *Every one, that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the Gospel's, shall receive a hundred fold now, with persecutions, and in the world to come eternal life*<sup>19</sup>.—*Whosoever shall be ashamed of me and my words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels*<sup>20</sup>.'

In verses 9 and 10 the *Kings of the earth* are represented as lamenting the fall of the antichristian church. These who 'were supported by it, in reducing their subjects to slavery in civil matters,' says Mr. Pyle, 'will have nothing left but—to bewail the ruin of such a well laid and truly politic scheme of imposing upon the minds of men.' *The merchants of the earth*, it is said in v. 11, *shall weep and mourn over her, for no man buyeth her merchandise*. They 'are,' says Dr. More, 'ecclesiastics or spiritual persons, which, in reproach to their worldliness in their pretended holy and spiritual functions, are here called *the merchants of the earth*<sup>21</sup>.' These are her teachers, says Mr. Pyle, who 'have so long made a trade of religion, and a *gain of godliness*; enriching themselves upon the spoils of men's understanding and properties; shining by the mere ignorance and darkness thrown upon the minds of their deluded people; trafficking with the souls<sup>22</sup> of men, as the old Tyrians did with their bodies.' 'Her merchants,' says Daubuz, 'engross all the real wealth of the world to bring to her, and her returns and exportations are in paper and bills

19 Mat. xix. 29. Mark x. 29, 30.

20 Mark viii. 38. Wakefield's Four Marks of Antichrist, p. 9.

21 That livings in the English church are publicly bought and sold like merchandise, the advertisements in our newspapers are sufficient to attest.

22 In v. 13 the *souls of men* are specified as one of the commodities in which they trade: but perhaps this phrase is not to be understood according to its obvious application.

drawn upon Heaven and Hell, never to be accepted. However these pass among the common people in payment, as if they were of real value. The 'merchant,' he adds, who discovers the means of procuring purchasers for them, is altogether careless 'about their intrinsic value.' A little farther it is said (v. 14), *And the fruits that thy soul lusted after are departed from thee, and all things which were dainty and goodly are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all.* 'These great and opime preferments and dignities,' says Dr. More, 'which thy ambitious and worldly mind so longingly hankered after,—All these are vanished never to appear again.' And it is added in v. 19, that they had been *made rich by reason of her costliness*, that is, as Dr. More explains it, 'out of that treasure of honors, dignities, preferments, and offices, wherewith she was able to enrich these *merchants*.' My quotations from ch. xviii. I conclude with a passage, which announces, in the strongest and most decisive language, the violent downfall of the symbolic Babylon. *And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all.*

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## CHAPTER XIV.

ON THE EXTENSIVE DIFFUSION OF ANTICHRISTIANISM IN WHAT  
IS CALLED THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

THE facts stated in the appendix to chapter XII. were sufficient to show, that the church of Rome rather adopted the opinions and practices which were before prevalent in the Christian world, than introduced new ones of her own. She had little indeed to do, but to imitate the conduct of the oriental priesthood, to make some lesser improvements and alterations, and to transfer the elevated



authority which others exerted to herself. Long before the haughty claims of the Roman pontiffs were admitted, the foundation of superstition was laid deep and on a very broad scale. Nor could absurdity easily be pushed to a greater extent. But notwithstanding this, there are not a few protestant interpreters who think proper to apply, without discrimination, all the prophecies relative to the corruption of Christianity *solely* and *exclusively* to the church of Rome; as if antichristian superstition and tyranny were *no where* to be found but within the verge of that church, or, if elsewhere found, had ceased to be offensive to the Deity.

That the celebrated Dr. Hartley; who in his inquiries after truth was exempt from the bias of party and from views of interest, is not to be ranked in this class of protestants, the following citation will evince. ‘There are *many* prophecies, which declare the fall of the ecclesiastical powers of the Christian world. And though each church seems to flatter itself with the hopes of being exempted; yet it is VERY PLAIN, that the prophetic characters belong to all. They have *all* left the true, pure, simple religion; and teach for doctrines the commandments of men. They are all merchants of the earth, and have set up a kingdom of this world, abounding in riches, temporal power, and external pomp. They have all a dogmatising spirit, and persecute such as do not receive their own mark, and worship the image which they have set up.—The corrupt governors of the several churches will ever oppose the true gospel, and in so doing will bring ruin upon themselves<sup>1</sup>.’ A late able and ingenious member of the established church, speaking of the fall of the figurative Babylon, says, ‘how far this danger may extend; and whether to all the churches who are guilty of the apostacy, by preferring and establishing the doctrines of men before the precepts of the gospel, may be well worth inquiry; especially as the whole Ten Kingdoms into

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1 Hartly on Man, 1749, vol. II. p. 370.

which the Roman empire was divided seem to be included in the threat, both in St. John's Revelation, and the prophecy of Daniel<sup>2</sup>. 'The church of Rome,' says another writer of distinguished eminence, belonging to our ecclesiastical establishment, 'is not the only church that wants amendment. Other Christian societies, which have separated themselves from her and from her grosser defects, are departed more or less from the original simplicity of the gospel, and have mixed some doctrines of men with the word of God<sup>3</sup>.'

A learned member of one of our English Universities, speaking of the emigrant French clergy, says, if the Apocalypse be a divine communication; and 'if our creeds be *their* creeds; our ecclesiastical courts *their* ecclesiastical courts; our liturgy a copy of theirs; a consequence will follow of which we are not aware; and of which time will

2 Thoughts on the Grand Apostacy, by H. Taylor, rector of Crawley and vicar of Portsmouth, author of Ben Mordecai's Apology for embracing Christianity, p. 138. Of the English writers on prophecy whom I have quoted, the greater part are clergymen in the established church. Beside Mede, More, Whiston, and Daubuz; besides bishops Hurd, Newton, Chandler, Patrick, Newcome, and Hallifax; there are Mr. Pyle, who was minister of Lynn Regis in Norfolk, and prebendary of Salisbury; Mr. W. Lowth, prebendary of Winchester and rector of Buriton in the county of Southampton; Dr. Lancaster, vicar of Bowden in Cheshire; Mr. Cradock, rector of North-Cadbury in Somersetshire; Mr. Brightman, rector of Haunes in Bedfordshire; Mr. Waple, vicar of St. Sepulchre's and archdeacon of Taunton; Dr. Cressener; Dr. Worthington, prebendary of York and vicar of Blodwel in Shropshire; Dr. Wells, rector of Cotesbatch in Leicestershire and Bleachley in Bucks; Dr. Apthorp, rector of St. Mary Le Bow; Mr. Gray, vicar of Farringdon, Bucks; Dr. Jortin, prebendary of St. Paul's, vicar of Kensington, and archdeacon of London; Dr. Hammond, rector of Penshurst, and prebendary of Christ Church; Dr. Whitby, rector of St. Edmund's Church, and prebendary of Taunton Regis; and Dr. Th. Burnet, master of the Charter-House. When *any* of these have been induced, by the inspection of prophecy, to utter any sentiments, adverse to the interests of ecclesiastical establishments; of them at least it cannot be suspected, that they have done it upon light grounds, or from the influence of prejudice.

3 Jortin's Rem. on Eccl. Hist. 3d. ed. vol. II. p. 436.

not fail to be the mighty arbiter<sup>4</sup>.' And the same gentleman, with a reference to the downfall of the Gallic hierarchy, asks a question, which the advocates of high church principles will find difficult to answer. 'If' says he, 'we be of that chosen people, who have in *truth* come out of Babylon, who partake not of her sins, and merit not of her plagues; why should we appear unprepared, or disinclined, to comply with the angelic mandate, and begin, at least, some prelude to that song of triumph, *Rejoice over her thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her*<sup>5</sup>?'

'If,' says an eminent divine of the church, 'General Councils have dogmatically decreed strange things, Little, National, Protestant synods have *often* acted in a manner full as arbitrary.—To compel any one to swear that he will *never* alter his opinions about controversial divinity is a grievous imposition,' But this was done in some of the Protestant synods. 'It might have made some unstable men go over to popery out of resentment, and say, *if I must surrender body, soul, sense, and understanding, the church of Rome shall have them, and not you*<sup>6</sup>.'

My next citation is from a celebrated sermon, which was grounded upon that neglected declaration of our Lord (John, xviii. 36), *Jesus answered, My Kingdom is not of this world*. 'The laws of this kingdom, therefore, as *Christ left* them, have nothing of this world in their view; no tendency either to the exaltation of *some* in worldly pomp and dignity; or to their absolute dominion over the faith and religious conduct of *others* of his subjects.' It is essential to it, 'that all his subjects, in what station soever they may be, are equally subjects to him; and that *no one* of them, any more than another, hath *authority*, either to make *new* laws for Christ's subjects; or to *impose a sense*

4 *A Sermon. preached in the Chapel of Trinity College, Cambridge, Dec. 19, 1793, p. 12.* It is by the Rev. Mr. Garnham, fellow of that college.

5 P. 16. Rev. xviii. 20.

6 Jortin's Rem. on Eccl. Hist. vol. I. pref. p. 14.

upon the *old* ones, which is the same thing.' It was not a little at variance with the ordinary course of events, that this and numerous passages of a similar cast should have been spoken, not only by one who stood in the highest rank of the English hierarchy, and before the nominal head of the church; but that they should have contributed to cause the author of them to be successively translated to the sees of Hereford, Salisbury, and Winchester<sup>7</sup>.

Dr. Henry More, zealous as he was for the honor of the church to which he belonged, has made some concessions, which are little entitled to the praise of prudence. Speaking of the prophecy of St. John, he says, 'this apocalyptic glass is not only for the Romanist but all the churches of Christendom to look their faces in, and to consider how much they are still engaged, or how far emerged out of this lapse and apostacy, or, whether they be quite emerged out of it or no. For I must confess I do much scruple the matter.—Let us see if we can find out, what remainders of this lapse are still upon us. Which I suppose we shall be more ready to acknowledge, by how much more they shall be found to symbolise with that church, whom we justly judge to be so manifest an apostate. Now I demand, is it not one fundamental miscarriage in that church, that they make things fundamental that are not, and mingle their own human inventions with the infallible oracles of God, and imperiously obtrude them upon the people? We are very sensible ourselves of this in ceremonies, and are not *uncertain and useless opinions* as arrant a ceremony as ceremonies themselves.—Nay, I may add also, that it will be hard to wash our hands clean from that other badge of *the Beast*, unchristian persecution in points of religion, and that for differences where Christ himself has made none<sup>8</sup>.'

7 See Hoadley's Serm. preached before George I. in 1717.

8 *Myst. of Godliness*, p. 205. Of the reformed churches he had in another place asserted, that they had 'separated from the Great Babylon, to build those that are lesser and more tolerable, but yet not to be tolerated for ever.' See *Myst. of Iniq.* p. 553. Finding that this language had the imputation of being unclerical, unguarded, and impolitic, he afterwards



*Babylon*, says Mr. Robertson<sup>9</sup>, is emblematic of the False Church in general, and not of Rome in particular. By a learned member of the university of Cambridge, it is observed in a late pamphlet, that ‘the woman represented in the seventeenth chapter, as seated on the Wild Beast, means the apostate church, supported by the civil power, in’ all those nations, which formerly constituted the Western division of the Roman empire in Europe<sup>10</sup> ‘The constant opposition between *the Holy City*, and *the Great City*, proves,’ says Jurieu, ‘that *the City* includes *the whole Antichristian church*, even as *the Holy City* signifies the whole Christian church”.’ The passage that follows is from Mr. Evanson. ‘The figurative terms, *Babylon the Great*, or *that Great City, the harlot of the kings of the earth*, are manifestly opposed to that of *Jerusalem, the Holy City, or the New Jerusalem*<sup>12</sup>, *the spouse of Christ*. And therefore since the latter type cannot denote any one particular city, but must necessarily include in its signifi-

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discovered a solicitude to retract it; declaims on ‘the multifarious sinfulness of Schism;’ and in the concluding chapter of his elaborate work on *the Mystery of Iniquity*, declares his belief, that he had there proved ‘clearly and convincingly, that the heaven-inspired prudence and judgment of the royal, heroical, and reverend reformers of our church of England have purged her and cleansed her from whatever doctrine or professed practice may rightly be deemed antichristian, and that she holds nor in-joins any thing that is contrary to the truly catholic and apostolic faith.’ That the church of England is not, like that of Rome, antichristian, he endeavors to prove from the charity which she exhibits. But his proof is rather of an equivocal kind. ‘Our English church,’ says he, is so far from being wanting in charity, ‘that she is exemplary in it, condemning the doctrines and practices of that worst of churches *no more than needs must*, and *courting the adverse party to her communion by all lawful accommodations and compliances in her public service*,’ p. 476, 477, 565. But whatever were the inconsistencies which shaded the literary character of Dr. More, his opinions were undoubtedly not biassed by any eagerness after preferment.

9 In his Com. on the Apoc.

10 Outline of a Commentary on Rev. xi. 1—14, p. 4, 5.

11 Vol. II. p. 262.

12 See this observed by Vitringa, in Apoc. p. 872 and p. 894.

tion every society of true Christians, who embrace and practise the pure religion of the Gospel, and acknowledge no Lord nor Lawgiver in religious concerns but Jesus Christ: so the former cannot be confined to any one church or city, but must needs extend to every society in every nation, by whatsoever denomination they may call themselves, who adopt the antichristian, or, which I take to be perfectly synonymous, the orthodox superstition, which temporal power alone hath established, and alone continues to uphold<sup>13</sup>.’

I have just transcribed a passage from one, who abandoned the English hierarchy, with its emoluments, its prospects, and connections, from a motive of conscience and a reverence for truth. I shall shortly quote from another gentleman, who has given the world a similar testimony of the sincerity of his intentions and the uprightness of his character; and shall shew, that we are warned, not only by the apostles John and Paul, but also by Christ in the most express terms, not to submit to those who set themselves up as our Spiritual superiors. He himself says, when addressing his disciples, *be not YE called Rabbi,—neither be YE called Masters.* And why? *For one is your master, even Christ; and ALL YE ARE BRETHREN*<sup>14</sup>. That is, as explained by Mr. Wakefield, ‘I am the person appointed by God to teach your religion, to prescribe your rule of faith, and to pronounce the terms of your admission to the privileges of the gospel. No man can claim this authority, and no man can prove his right to exercise it, but myself. Ye are ALL equally my disciples and my subjects: children of the same God, professors of the same gospel, and fellow-heirs of immortality. Of the same purport precisely,’ adds Mr. Wakefield, ‘is that other injunction of our master: *call NO MAN your FATHER upon the earth; for one is your FATHER, which is in heaven*<sup>15</sup>. *Fa-*

13 Let. to Hurd, p. 108.

14 Mat. xxiii. 8, 10.

15 Mat. xxiii. 9

*ther*, in the usage of the Eastern nations, was a term of respectful address from the young to the aged, from one of inferior rank to his superior. Accordingly, the patriarch Joseph, to convey an idea of his great power and influence with the king of Egypt, tells his brethren, that *God had made him a Father to Pharaoh*<sup>16</sup>. The term *Pope*, by which the head of the Romish church is denominated, is of Eastern original, and signifies a Father. Strange infatuation ! (from which *the Heads and Fathers* of other churches might learn wisdom) that a spiritual potentate should assume a title so specifically antichristian.—The doctrine deducible from these passages of scripture is plain and positive beyond all power of illustration. If we comply with subscription to a profession of religious faith, demanded of us by a bishop or any other man, we immediately, by that act, acknowledge HIM, and not Jesus, for our FATHER, our RABBI, and our TEACHER: we are not contented with that system of faith and practice, which Jesus Christ has given us, or rather we disclaim it, and receive in its stead a creed, digested and modelled and explained for us by a BROTHER, a man of the same dignity and weight in the Gospel as ourselves<sup>17</sup>.

The second mark of Antichrist, which this learned writer mentions, is ‘the enjoining of *other Terms of Communion*, than those required and appointed by our Lord himself and his apostles. *Verily, verily, I say unto you*, says our Saviour, *he, that heareth my word, and believeth on him, that sent me, hath everlasting Life*<sup>18</sup>. *What must I do to be saved*<sup>19</sup> ! said the Jailor to Paul and Silas. *Believe the articles of the church of England*; reply the bishop of these latter times. But what say the primitive bishops of the church? *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved and thy house*<sup>20</sup>. To the same purpose this noble ad-

16 Gen. xlv. 8.

17 Four Marks of Antichrist, 1788, p. 17, 18.

18 John v. 24.

19 Acts xvi. 30.

20 V. 31.

vocate of Christian Liberty declares in another place ; *Other foundation can NO MAN lay, than that is laid which is Jesus Christ*<sup>21</sup>. These are the terms of salvation, these the conditions of Christian fellowship, laid down by the divine founder of our religion, and those disciples, who had received their instructions from his own mouth. If we multiply these conditions, and much more if we substitute others in their place, we are undoubtedly the enemies of the cross of Christ, fellow-workers with *the Man of Sin* in subverting the authority of the Messiah.'

The inordinate spirit of ambition, the love of pre-eminence and power, *the strife* to be ranked among *the greatest*, is, says Mr. Wakefield, another mark of antichristianism, and 'operates with perpetual vigor in the church of England.—Our Saviour's own words shall be our direction and authority upon this point also. *And there was also a STRIFE among them, which of them should be accounted the GREATEST. And he said unto them, the kings of the Gentiles exercise Lordship over them: and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. BUT YE SHALL NOT BE SO; but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger, and he that is chief, as he that doth serve*<sup>22</sup>.—Now in the church of England, there is *every gradation of pre-eminence*, every variety of dignified titles (more than I can number) from the high distinction of an archbishop to the humble drudgery of an officiating curate ; and every proportion of emolument, from eight to ten thousand a year with the work of *one hour*, to forty pounds with *the burden and heat of the day* ! What objects of ambition are here presented to the view of a minister !—And it is most certain and notorious, that many of the inferior clergy are unwearied in their solicitations of preferment, and suffer those views to engross their thoughts, and influence the whole tenor of their lives.—It is also as notorious,—that many of the bishops themselves are, and always have been, as eager and assiduous in procuring their elevation from sees of

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21 1 Cor. iii. 11.

22 Luke xxii. 24—26.



less value to the more opulent. With this view, they *bow*, and often *sell themselves*, to kings, and ministers, and the great ones of the earth ; *striving* truly to be GREAT, and rich, and powerful, in *a kingdom which is not of this world*<sup>23</sup> : in the kingdom of a meek, and persecuted, and crucified Saviour, who had not *where to lay his head*.—True Christianity can no more be separated from love and freedom and humility, than the profession of it in our national established church from strife and tyranny and ambition.—Her dignitaries in particular should consider with themselves, whether their Lord and Master was sent into the world to establish bishoprics, to dispense power and emoluments, and to domineer over his flock and the pastors of his flock ; or rather to warn his followers against covetousness<sup>24</sup>, to preach the gospel to the poor<sup>25</sup> and deliverance to the captives<sup>26</sup>, to make all mankind *love as brethren*<sup>27</sup>, all his disciples EQUAL, as the Lord's freemen<sup>28</sup> ; and whether he has not positively declared, that *whosoever EXALTETH HIMSELF shall be ABASED*<sup>29</sup>. Sure I am, that the permanency of such an ecclesiastical constitution would form an insuperable objection not only to Christianity, but to a moral government of the world<sup>30</sup>.'

What is the nature of the articles of the church of England? Are they plain? Are they confined to points that are little disputable? Are the propositions they contain few in number? Far otherwise. 'So long as the Christian religion,' says a sagacious prelate of the last century, 'was a simple profession of the articles of belief, and a hearty prosecution of the rules of good life, the fewness of the articles, and the clearness of the rule, was a cause of the seldom prevarication. But when divinity is swelled up to so great a body, when the several questions, which

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23 John xviii. 36.

25 Mat. xi. 5.

27 1 Pet. iii. 8.

29 Mat. xxiii. 12.

24 Luke xii. 13.

26 Luke iv. 18.

28 1 Cor. vii. 22.

30 P. 20—29.

the peevishness and wantonness of sixteen ages have commenced, are concentered into one, and from all these questions something is drawn into the body of theology, till it hath ascended up to the greatness of a mountain;—it is impossible for any industry to consider so many particulars in the infinite numbers of questions, as are necessary to be considered, before we can with certainty determine any.—The obscurity of some questions, the nicety of some articles,—the variety of human understandings, the windings of logic,—the infinity of authorities,—the several degrees of probability, the difficulties of scripture,' and 'the indefatigable industry of some men to abuse all understandings and all persuasions into their own opinions,—have made it impossible for any man, in so great a variety of matter, not to be deceived<sup>31</sup>.'

What is the primary object which the church of England has avowedly in view? It is to prevent diversities of opinion; an object altogether wild, and impossible to be effected. Hear what a learned prelate of Ireland says on the subject. 'I apprehend,' says bp. Clayton, 'any attempt towards avoiding diversity of opinion, not only to be a useless, but an impracticable scheme.—I do not only doubt, whether the compilers of the Articles, but even whether any *two thinking men* ever agreed exactly in their opinion, not only with regard to all the articles, but even with regard to any one of them<sup>32</sup>.' The definition, which another learned clergyman has given of a theological system, deserves also to be cited. It 'is too often a temple consecrated to implicit faith, and he who enters in there to worship, instead of leaving his shoes, after the eastern manner, must leave his understanding at the door; and it will be well if he find it, when he comes out again<sup>33</sup>.'

31 Jer. Taylor's *Liberty of Prophesying*, sect. 13.

32 The extract above, transcribed from the prelate's dedication to his *Essay on Spirit*, is immediately taken from *the Confessional*, a work of singular merit, which has often been attacked, but never confuted. 3d ed. p. 246.

33 Jortin's *Dissert.* p. 113.

What is it, says Dr. Furneaux, which can render a diversity 'of religious persuasions, dangerous to the magistrate, and to the safety of the community?—It is not the prevalence of a variety of religious sentiments, where equal liberty is maintained; but it is a spirit of intolerance, it is the existence of penal laws, it is oppression and persecution alone.—It is not easy, I think hardly possible, to mention the period, or the country, in which religious disputes have been, I do not say fatal, but in any great degree injurious to the public safety, or the public tranquillity, where a just toleration hath been allowed by the magistrate; and where instead of enacting penal laws to suppress any particular religious party, he hath discharged the duty of his office, in obliging all of them to live in peace<sup>34</sup>.' Were uniformity of faith in a system of theology an object capable of being accomplished, and were the established system exempt from error, the attainment of this object, if obtained by methods of injustice and violence, would be purchased at too dear a price. 'If,' says a dignitary of the English church, the magistrate 'forces me to profess and practise *what is true religion*, and what I myself believe to be so, he, at the same time, destroys the virtue of this religion, and deprives me of my reward in heaven; for whatever I do in religion, out of force and constraint, upon worldly motives and considerations, out of fear of the civil powers, or the like, is no religion at all, nor is there any virtue in any actions which are performed upon such principles as these; for religion must be built upon our regard to God<sup>35</sup>.'

That 'conscience is not controllable by human laws, nor amenable to human tribunals,' was the declaration of the late lord Mansfield<sup>36</sup>; 'an incomparable maxim,' says Dr.

34 Ess. on Toleration, 1773, p. 17, 24.

35 Thirty-Six Discourses on Practical Subjects, by Dr. Ibbot, prebendary of Westminster and rector of St Paul Shadwell, 1776, vol. II. p. 456.

36 See his speech in the House of Lords, in the Sheriff's case. Debrett's Parl. Deb. from the year 1743 to 1774, vol. IV. p. 955.

Furneaux, 'which contains the sum of all that can be said on the head of religious liberty.—Now religion is a concern between God and a man's own conscience; a concern therefore, for the right conception and conduct of which he is alone accountable to God's Religion consequently, especially a particular mode of religion, ought not to be imposed and enjoined by human authority; that is, by temporal penalties, which are the only means in the magistrate's power, to force obedience to his laws. This point, I think, will appear very plain, if we only attend to the nature of religion, as arising from inward conviction, which penal laws cannot produce; and as founded, not upon human, but solely upon divine authority, which every man is bound implicitly to obey, without regard to any human authority whatsoever. In short, to secure the favor of God, and the rewards of true religion, we must follow our own consciences and judgments, according to the best light we can obtain; not the judgment of the magistrate; nor the judgments of any other men, of whatever character, civil or ecclesiastical, when they are different from or contrary to our own<sup>37</sup>.'

'There is,' says a nervous and spirited writer, 'no more harm in a difference of opinions in religion, than in learning and philosophy. It is the necessary result of reason and free inquiry, and I know of no benefit we should get by that great object of political religion, uniformity of doctrines, except it be a loss of shewing our moderation and charity. The only way to accomplish universal agreement in opinion, would be to suppress all the means of knowledge, to shut up the book of life, and let ignorance be the mother of devotion. We should then have but one faith, or more properly speaking, we should have no faith at all, but be fit for every thing that ambitious rulers and priests would wish<sup>38</sup>.' But the constructors of the English hie-

37 Ess. on Toleration, p. 8.

38 A Sermon by E. Radcliff, occasioned by the Denial of Relief, respecting Subscription to the Articles of the Ch. of Eng. 1772, p. 29.



rarchy professed to be of a different opinion; and her champions have conceived, that uniformity of faith is to be guarded by the enactment of penal statutes, with a long train of civil disabilities and vexatious punishments, so destitute of all color of justice, so irreconcilable with every consideration of expediency, that their most bigotted advocates have long since ceased to call for their enforcement, though they still persevere in resisting their repeal.

To suppose, as some have done, says the celebrated archdeacon of Cleveland, 'that the great Author of Nature hath left it as free for magistrates and legislators, to establish by human laws what doctrines or modes of religion they chuse, or find expedient for secular utility; as it is for them to chuse what modes of civil society they find convenient;—is to suppose, that there never was any *authentic* revelation of true religion in the world. For as surely as God hath revealed true religion, so surely has he inhibited magistrates, and all others, from establishing any thing contrary to it, or deviating from it<sup>39</sup>.'

'For the magistrate to interpose, and make himself a judge and a revenger in affairs which are purely of a religious nature, is,' says another dignitary of the English church, 'to transgress the bounds of his duty, and to invade the prerogative of God; it is (to borrow the words of an incomparable author) "to judge and misuse the servants of another master, who are not at all accountable to him." For nothing can be more clear or certain, than that as religion has God only for its author, so it is properly *his* care and concern only. The laws of religion are the laws of God only, and he himself has appointed rewards and punishments for the observers and transgressors of them. He has taken this whole matter upon himself, and reserved it to himself, and has no where authorised any man, or any number of men, to be his deputies or vicegerants in his behalf. So that it is highly wicked and unjust in any man to usurp any authority over others in cases of a religious

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39 Confessional, 3d ed. p. 257.

nature, in matters of faith and conscience. For here God himself has laid down the rule of our actions, and not left it to others to prescribe to us. He himself has set before us our duty, and has told us, that *he* will judge of the performance: and for any man, after this, to pretend to any power over us here, is to forestall the judgment of God, and take God's cause out of his own hands<sup>40</sup>.'

'The way to our future happiness has,' observes Sir William Temple, 'been perpetually disputed throughout the world, and must be left at last to the impressions made upon every man's belief and conscience, either by natural or supernatural arguments and means; which impressions men may disguise or dissemble, but no man can resist. For belief is no more in a man's power, than his stature or his feature; and he that tells me, I must change my opinion for his, because it is the truer and the better, without other arguments, that have to me the force of conviction, may as well tell me, I must change my grey eyes, for others like his that are black, because they are lovelier, or more in esteem<sup>41</sup>.' To the same purpose asks Dr. Ibbot. 'Of what use can human laws, enforced by civil penalties, be in matters of religion? 'They may make me do things which are in my power, and depend upon my will; but to believe this, or that, to be true, is not in my power, nor depends upon my will, but upon the light, and evidence, and information which I have. And will civil discouragements and incapacities, fines and confiscations, stripes and imprisonments, enlighten the understanding, convince men's minds of error, and inform them of the truth? Can they have any such efficacy, as to make men change the inward judgment they have framed of things? Nothing can do this, but reason and argument. This is what our minds and understandings will naturally yield to; but they cannot be compelled to believe any thing by outward force. So that

<sup>40</sup> Ibbot's Disc. vol. II. p. 452.

<sup>41</sup> Sir W. Temple's Works, fol. 1740, vol. I. p. 55.

the promoting of true religion is plainly out of the magistrate's *reach*, as well as beside his *office*<sup>42</sup>.'

Little as toleration was understood in the middle of the last century, a treatise was published, somewhat earlier than that period, containing a number of excellent observations on this subject. 'Force in matters of opinion can do no good,—for no man can change his opinion when he will, or be satisfied in his reason, that his opinion is false, because discountenanced. If a man could change his opinion when he lists, he might cure many inconveniences of his life; all his fears and his sorrows would soon disband, if he would but alter his opinion, whereby he is persuaded, that such an accident that afflicts him is an evil, and such an object formidable; let him but believe himself impregnable, or that he receives a benefit when he is plundered, disgraced, imprisoned, condemned, and afflicted, neither his sleeps need to be disturbed, nor his quietness discomposed.' To employ force in religion, 'either punishes sincerity, or persuades hypocrisy; it persecutes a truth, or drives into error; and it teaches a man to dissemble and to be safe, but never to be honest'<sup>43</sup>.'

But an antichristian claim of dominion over the conscience, though it be the principal feature of resemblance between the church of England and the church of Rome, is not the only one. The author of a pamphlet, published in the last century<sup>44</sup>, entitled *An Agreement between the Church of England and Church of Rome Evinc'd*, after observing, that 'they both pitch upon the episcopal government, as distributed into the several subordinations of combined churches, as what is by *divine institution* made the government of this church;' and noticing those different ranks of deacon, archdeacon, bishop, and archbishop; says, 'compare the national church of England with the French or Spanish national churches, and the order is the

42 Ibbot's Disc. vol. II. p. 454.

43 Bp. Taylor's *Liberty of Prophesying*, sect. 13.

44 In the year 1687.

same in all. The *causes* also which belong unto their jurisdiction are in both the same, viz. causes testamentary and matrimonial, &c. Besides, the *Laws*<sup>45</sup>, by which they exercise their power, are in both for the most part the same.' Whilst the English clergy 'condemn the papists for setting up a Catholic Supreme Pastor, *they* erect a National Supreme Pastor, both churches asserting infallibility in their way, the church of Rome more plainly and directly, the Protestant national churches by inevitable consequence: for all churches, that punish others for not owning and submitting to their dictates and mandates, do thereby declare their own infallibility therein; for it is the most unjust and unreasonable thing in the world for me to pretend to force another to believe and practise that, which I am not *assured* to be truth.' After endeavoring to shew at length, 'the agreement there is between the church of England-clergy and the Roman Catholic about their *ministry, the nature of ceremonies, the arguments for them, the reasons why Dissenters ought to submit unto them, and about image-worship*;' he says, I will 'only add what a great bishop of the church of England reports concerning the *Prayers* of the church of England; and it is this. "There is nothing in our prayers, but what hath been approved by the popes

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45 The passage that follows is taken from a celebrated work, written by an orthodox dignitary of the church and a zealous supporter of the hierarchy. 'It seems *prodigious*, at first sight, that when *the yoke of Rome* was thrown off, the new church, erected in opposition to it, should still continue to be governed by the laws of the old. *The pretence* was, that this was only by way of interim, till a body of ecclesiastical laws could be formed: and to cover this pretence the better, some steps were, in fact, taken towards the execution of such a design. But *the meaning* of the crown certainly was to uphold its darling supremacy, even on the old footing of the canon laws.' The same writer, in elsewhere treating on the same subject and the same period, says, 'the ecclesiastical jurisdiction was not annihilated, but *transferred*: and all the power of the Roman pontiff now centered in the king's person. Henceforth then we are to regard him in a more awful point of view; as armed with both swords at once; and, as Nat. Bacon expresses it in his way, as a strange kind of monster, "A king with a pope in his belly." Hurd's Dial. Mor. and Pol. 1st ed. p. 266, 292.



themselves, and taken out of the liturgies of the most Holy Fathers, which is so very true, that some of the popes would have approved of that form of Holy Offices which we use, would we but acknowlege his authority<sup>46</sup>.” ‘The truth of this agreement between the two churches has been so very obvious to some great men of the Roman communion, that they have applauded those of the English clergy, who wrote against Dissenters, as excellent defenders of the Catholic cause<sup>47</sup>.’

‘The clergy of the church of England, it is true,’ (I am here quoting from a member of that church, the author of the Confessional,) ‘have constantly *disclaimed* all connexion with popery, or any design or disposition to promote that cause ; which however is but an equivocal proof of a different spirit, and none at all that the tendency of their doctrines doth not bend towards popery.’ The archdeacon of Cleveland also elsewhere asserts, that the principles of Ap. Laud and his confederates ‘have been espoused and pursued by their successors, in such sort, as to give more than a suspicion to some competent observers, that the church of England has been and still is, though by degrees imperceptible to vulgar eyes, edging back once more towards popery<sup>48</sup>.’ And certainly, whatever change the

46 Davenant. Determ. 27.

47 P. 46, 59. Thus says he, ‘Reynolds, the jesuit, affirms, that archp. Whitgift against Cartwright has defended the Catholic cause ; and, in his writings against Whitaker, makes great use of Whitgift’s book. Scultingius and Stapleton give the same character both of the writings of Whitgift, and his successor Bancroft against the Puritans.—And Hooker, for the service *he* did the church of Rome, in his writings for the worship and discipline of the church of England, has had the praises of the Romanists.’

48 Confessional, p. 324, 328. In the last of these pages, the author of this justly admired work, speaking of a pamphlet, entitled, ‘*a Short and True Account of the several Advances the Church of England hath made towards Rome*, which was published in 1680, and written by Du Moulin, some time Professor of History at Oxford, says, the instances here alleged ‘might be continued even to the present times, by the addition of examples still more striking than those of Du. Moulin.’

demolition of the Gallic hierarchy may have produced in the sentiments of the English prelates and clergy, and whatever effect it may be thought to have had in checking a liberal spirit, to the church of Rome at least the alteration has not in this country been unfavorable. Viewing the English hierarchy as a daughter of the church of Rome, some have heretofore been disposed to charge her with ingratitude ; because, though she treads in the steps of her parent-hierarchy, and is decked with many of the same ornaments, though from her she derives her very existence, and betrays in her features a strong family-likeness, she has nevertheless been accustomed not only to disown all connexion with her, but unceasingly to load her with the bitterest and most opprobrious language. At length, however, the church of England is disposed to wipe off this reproach. At length the relationship between the two churches is acknowledged by both parties ; they are declared to have a common cause ; and the parent-church, now bending under the weight of years, is looked up to with respect by her rebellious daughter, and her sufferings are contemplated with unfeigned sorrow.

‘ Is it not plain,’ asks the author of *an Essay on the Kingdom of Christ*, ‘ that a National church is inimical to the spirit of our Lord’s declaration, MY KINGDOM IS NOT OF THIS WORLD ? Does not that comprehensive and important saying compel us to view the church and the world in a *contrasted* point of light ? And does not the idea of a national church lead us to *confound* them ?—The church of England, indeed, is manifestly a secular kingdom. For it is established by human laws, and acknowledges a political head ; nor is it esteemed material whether that head be male or female. It is a creature of the state, supported by the state, incorporated with the state, and governed by a code of laws confirmed by the state ; a code, very different from the sacred canons of the New Testament ; those being quite foreign to its constitution. Its principal officers are appointed by the

crown ; and, in virtue of ecclesiastical station, are lords of parliament.'

' The new Oeconomy, being intended for all nations and all succeeding ages, is equally fitted for the rich and the poor ; nor does it make any distinction, in regard to places, where its worship should be performed.—To think of doing honor to Christianity, by erecting *pompous places* of worship, by *consecrating* those places, and by adorning ministers with *showy vestments*,' is highly absurd. ' Let the nobles and judges of the land, when acting agreeably to their different characters, appear in robes of state and in robes of magistracy ; as those things belong to the kingdoms of *this world*.—But confine them there, and by no means think of decorating the kingdom, or of promoting the cause, of Christ, by any thing similar. Were any man to lacker gold, and paint the diamond, to increase their lustre, he would certainly be considered as insane. Yet the conduct of those persons is more absurd, who borrow the trappings of secular kingdoms, to adorn the spiritual kingdom of Jesus Christ. As to places of worship,—to lay the first stone of such an edifice with solemn formalities, is Jewish : to dedicate it, when completed, to any particular saint, is manifestly superstitious.—If *secular grandeur*, however, must needs attend the religion of him who was born in a stable, and lived in poverty ; who received the acclamations of royalty, when riding upon an ass, and quickly after expired on a cross ; if, I say, it *must* appear in the worship of any who pretend to follow the fishermen of Galilee, those prime-ministers in the Messiah's kingdom, let it be confined to such as avow themselves members of a national establishment.—Let those monopolise the splendor in question who consider the church and the state as of equal dimensions ; who acknowledge a visible head of political royalty ; and who must search, not the New Testament, but a code of canons and constitutions larger than the whole Bible<sup>49</sup>, if they would know on what

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49 ' Referring to Gibson's *Codex*.'

foundations their ecclesiastical fabric stands, and by what laws it is governed. The national form of the Jewish church being their model, and a temporal monarch being their head, why should not they have magnificent cathedrals, and consecrate them like Jewish temples? As the head of the English church is adorned with royal robes; as the principal officers in it are appointed by him, and are lords in the legislature; and as it is established by laws of the state; who shall forbid the various orders of its ministers being adorned with sounding titles and with pompous canonicals? There is no reason to wonder, that, in such a constitution and such a polity, almost every thing should wear a secular appearance<sup>50</sup>.

The sordid system of rendering religion an amusement to the senses, rather than a corrective of the heart, and a guide to the understanding, the Protestant churches have not all carried to an equally criminal extent. But an excess of intolerance they have all exhibited. The acts of persecution, with which *they*, as well as the Romish hierarchies, are chargeable, are not characterised by a small degree of enormity, nor confined to a small number of instances. To descend to particulars would be foreign to the design of the present work. One extract, connected with this subject, shall, however, be introduced. It is from a treatise by Mr. Taylor of Portsmouth. Bucer scrupled not 'to declare in the pulpit, that Michael Servetus deserved to have his entrails pulled out, and be torn in pieces: and Farrel, in a letter to Calvin,' speaking of Servetus, says, "the judges must be very *cruel*, and perfect enemies to Christ, if they are not affected with the horrid blasphemies with which that pernicious heretic attacks the divine Majesty, and endeavors to overthrow the gospel, and to corrupt all churches. But I hope those that are commended for inflicting a just punishment upon thieves

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<sup>50</sup> *Ess. on the Kingdom of Chr.* by Abraham Booth, 1788, p. 33, 34, 65, 70, 72.



and sacrilegious persons, will do their duty in this case, by *taking off* a man, who has so long and obstinately persisted in his heresy."—Lubenjecius tells us, that this Farrel not only determined that Servetus should be cut off, but the extirpation of all heretics ; which gave Gro-tius occasion to say, that the spirit of Antichrist reigned not only at the Tiber, but also at the lake of Geneva. Both Calvin, and dreaming Beza, as Sir Isaac Newton calls him, wrote in defence of punishing heretics by the civil magistrate. Each of these reformers, says Lubenjecius, taking a dart out of the quiver of the church of Rome and her adherents, to thrust it with greater fury into the sides of the heretics of their own making<sup>51</sup>.'

It is, indeed, a strong argument against the existence of any hierarchies, that they not unfrequently debase the character of those who belong to them ; and, whether they are in pursuit or in possession of eminent ecclesiastical honors, infuse into their minds an antichristian spirit of persecution and bigotry, and render them the determined enemies of Civil Liberty and the interests of mankind. Many a priest, in proportion to the elevation of rank to which he has attained, has thought himself bound zealously to oppose Political Freedom, together with the Freedom of Inquiry, and the Freedom of Religious Worship. I need not go far in order to find persons, whose conduct and whose writings have illustrated this position : I need not go beyond the circle of writers, whom I have had occasion to cite most frequently in the present work : I need not select any other person as illustrative of my assertion, than the late bishop of Bristol.

The remainder of the chapter may be viewed in the light of a digression. But in a work, where there is so great a sameness of subject, and where so much dry discussion must be unavoidably introduced, a few digressions may probably not be unseasonable, should they have a ten-

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51 Farther Thoughts on the Nature of the Grand Apostacy, p. 75.

dency to relieve the wearied attention of the reader. Before bishop Newton breathed the contagious air of the house of Lords and the court of St. James's, he wrote like an ardent friend of liberty. In proof of this, I cite a passage from one of the more early of his Dissertations. 'It must,' says he, 'afford all readers of an exalted taste and generous sentiments, all the friends and lovers of liberty, a very sensible pleasure to hear the prophets exulting over such tyrants and oppressors as the kings of Assyria. In the xivth chapter of Isaiah there is an *epinikion*, or a triumphant ode upon the fall of Babylon. It represents the infernal mansions as moved, and the ghosts of deceased tyrants as rising to meet the king of Babylon, and congratulate his coming among them.—The Greek poet Alcæus, who is so celebrated for his hatred to tyrants, and whose odes were animated with the spirit of liberty no less than with the spirit of poetry, we may presume to say, never wrote any thing comparable to it.—But not only in this particular, but in general the scriptures, though often perverted to the purposes of tyranny, are yet in their own nature calculated to promote the civil as well as the religious liberties of mankind. True religion, and virtue, and liberty are more nearly related, and more intimately connected with each other, than people commonly consider<sup>52</sup>.'

But a change of situation dictated a change of language, and insensibly produced an alteration of sentiment. In 1780 bp. Newton sounded the trumpet of alarm against the associations, which peaceably assembled to promote a parliamentary reform, and which were at that time zealously supported by the duke of Richmond and by William Pitt. In a letter<sup>53</sup>, addressed by the bishop of Bristol to the house of commons, and distributed among its members,

52 Diss. on the Proph. vol. I. p. 311. 'Equality, in its rational acceptance, as relating to civil privileges and impartial laws, is interwoven with Christianity itself: they must live or perish together.' *Spirit of Christianity compared with the Spirit of the Times*, by Gilbert Wakefield, p. 27.

53 Inserted in vol. I. of his Works.

he says, ‘ Assert your dignity, maintain your authority.— Without your exertions there will be an utter end of all law and of all government. All such associations should be suppressed and strictly forbidden in future, and all such committee-men should be punished as TRAITORS to their king and country.’ ‘ The people *cannot*,’ says the prelate in this letter, ‘ now complain of a corrupt parliament ;’ and he recommends, that the election of members of parliament should be rendered less popular. ‘ The greater the property, the greater in proportion should be the number of votes. It cannot be fitting or proper, that the needy and necessitous should enjoy the same privileges and prerogatives as the rich and opulent.’ Convinced that servants in particular ought to be placed in a state of greater subjection to the rich, he asks, whether a law should not be framed, ‘ for granting to masters a just authority over them ?—It may also deserve consideration, whether some corporal correction, so many blows, so many lashes, may not be properly inflicted under certain regulations for certain faults, and have as good an effect in domestic as in military discipline ?’ Perhaps the mode of treating the Africans in the West-India islands would have furnished his lordship with some valuable hints for the completion of his plan. The propriety of shackling freedom of debate is another of the topics enforced by him in this curious circular letter. There are ‘ schools of oratory,’ says he, where ‘ men assemble, and harangue, and argue in imitation of the debates in parliament.’ Shocked that they should have the impudence in this manner to imitate their superiors, the bishop recommends, that justices of the peace should be empowered to regulate, and, if they please, to suppress, all societies for public debate and discussion.

In this letter also he expresses his regret, that the power of ecclesiastics should have had so great a diminution in this country. ‘ Censures, penances, excommunications have,’ he exclaims, ‘ lost their force ; the canons are become no more than *bruta fulmina*, and are no more regard-

ed. If processes are commenced in the spiritual court, they are soon removed by appeals to the civil courts.' But that his lordship's readers will sympathise with him in his sorrow, or regard this as any very terrible evil is not perhaps perfectly certain. At Bristol, he had, however, the satisfaction of persecuting a number of Roman Catholics, and an opportunity of proving, that the prelates of this country have not lost all their authority. These Catholics of Bristol, it seems, had been *guilty of the crime* of preparing to open a public chapel. Having appointed the priest and the proprietor of the building to meet him at the house of the mayor of Bristol, his lordship there explained to them the heinousness of their offence. He told them, that 'to presume upon opening a public mass-house in such a public place was so daring an affront, so contemptuous a defiance of all law and authority, that no government would or could endure it;' and he declared to them, that 'if they should still persist in their purpose, he was authorised by the minister to declare unto them, that he would employ the whole force of government, and prosecute them to the utmost severity of the law<sup>54</sup>.' His lordship's threats produced their natural effect. Those, who had the audacity (I am using a word in unison with the prelate's own expressions) to form the design of publicly worshipping God in their own way, and of following the dictates of their consciences, in the city of Bristol, were compelled to abandon it, and to convert the building to a different purpose.

Speaking of those who conducted the opposition against Lord North's administration, our courtly prelate says; they

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54 These are the bishop's own words, as recorded by him in his *Life*, p. 88. This, which was written by himself, was published with his works in 1782. In one of the more early of his Dissertations on Prophecy (vol. I. p. 244), he says, 'they are only pretended friends to the church, but real enemies to religion, who encourage persecution of any kind.' Afterwards perhaps he thought, that he who has attained to the episcopal dignity is so far elevated above the mass of mankind, as to be exempted from the observance of those rules, which ought to regulate the conduct of common men.



have ‘advanced and propagated such levelling notions, as would not only be the ruin of our happy constitution, but are subversive of all law, of all government, of all society whatever; that all men are born equals; that every man is his own governor and legislator; that no man ought to pay taxes who is not represented; that elections of members of parliament should be annual; that every man of the age of twenty-one should have a vote; that the power of the people is supreme above all; that the people have a right to call their governors to account, and to redress all grievances; that the King was made for the people, and not the people for the King; that the King is only a servant of the people; that the people have deposed and murdered Kings, and may again<sup>55</sup>.’ Little did this right reverend author suspect, that these *detestable* notions, before the expiration of the 18th century, would obtain throughout France a general currency. Apprised that the death of the bp. of Bristol took place in the year 1782, one should be tempted to conclude, were there not evidence to the contrary, that the passage recited above was copied from the debates in parliament, and from the speech of some living prelate, who had deemed it expedient to abuse the French nation, and to declaim against French principles.

There is also another prelate and writer on prophecy, from whom I have had very frequent occasion to quote, whose inconsistencies and degeneracy are well adapted for illustrating the baleful effects, which naturally result from

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55 Thus he expresses himself in *the Account* of his own *Life*, p. 124. But his *Life of Milton* (p. 28), prefixed to his edition of the *Paradise Lost*, will prove, that there was a time, when he could speak even of the last of these opinions, without testifying the slightest disapprobation of it; and could express himself in such a manner, as if he believed it to be true, and that the truth of it was capable of proof. It was, says he, in a house in High Holborn, that Milton prosecuted his studies till the king’s trial and death, when ‘the Presbyterians declaiming *tragically* against the king’s *execution*, and asserting that his person was sacred and inviolable, provoked him to write the *Tenure of Kings and Magistrates*, proving that it is lawful to call a tyrant to account, and to depose and put him to death.’

a situation in the sunshine of the court, and from the possession of exalted rank in the church. It is the present bishop of Worcester to whom I refer, an ecclesiastic, certainly not less learned nor less enlightened than the late bishop of Bristol. The succeeding extracts transcribed from his works, and an acquaintance with the maxims by which his actions have been regulated, will be sufficient to shew, that there has been an entire want of harmony between his sentiments as *a man*, and his conduct as *a bishop*.

When bp. Hurd was nothing more than the fellow of a College, and the minister of St. Andrew's the Little in Cambridge, he then asserted, that 'Rational Enquiry is the Pride and Prerogative of human nature;' and that Religion itself is *founded* 'in Free Enquiry, and the Liberty of Private Judgment'<sup>56</sup>. But when he was raised from the rank of a batchelor in Divinity to an episcopal throne, he then declared himself, in his primary visitation charge, to be an advocate for *Compulsion* in matters of religion, for that is the word his lordship has thought proper to employ. In this charge, he discovered himself to be of opinion, that the New Testament cannot safely be entrusted in the hands of mankind, until its doctrines have been modelled at the discretion of princes and priests; and prostituted his talents in defending the imposition of creeds and modern formularies of artificial theology<sup>57</sup>; formularies, which

56 See a Sermon on Prov. xxii. 6, preached at Cambridge by Richard Hurd, B. D. in 1753, p. 14.

57 See the Charge delivered to the Clergy of the Diocese of Litchfield and Coventry, at the bishop's primary visitation in 1775 and 1776. When 'persons in high stations in the church,' says Dr. Hartley (*On Man*, vol. II. p. 371), 'have their eyes enlightened, and see the corruptions and deficiencies of it, they must incur the prophetic censures *in the highest degree*, if they still concur, nay, if they do not endeavor to reform and purge out these defilements.' To the attention of bp. Hurd, and the other ecclesiastics, who occupy the episcopal bench, as to the persons principally accountable for a long list of theological dogmata being still arbitrarily imposed upon the minds of thousands, I would recommend one of our Saviour's most awful denunciations. *Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!* Mat. xviii. 7.

serve no other purpose than to create animosity, and engender indolence<sup>58</sup>, to encourage hypocrisy, and shackle inquiry, to check the advancement of religious knowledge, and to accelerate the growth of infidelity.

The passages that follow are from bp. Hurd's *Moral and Political Dialogues*<sup>59</sup>, a work which has deservedly attained to a very considerable height of reputation. In stating his ideas, respecting the measures adopted by the two first British princes of the house of Stuart, and the consequent overthrow of Charles the First and the monarchy, he says, 'Every dormant privilege of the crown, every phantom of prerogative, which had kept the simpler ages in awe, was now very unseasonably conjured up, to terrify all that durst oppose themselves to encroaching royalty. Lawyers and churchmen were employed in this service. And in their fierce endeavor to uphold a tottering throne by false supports, they entirely overthrew it. The nation was out of all patience to hear the one decree the empire of the kings of England to be absolute and uncontrollable by human law: and the other gave more offence, than they found credit, by pretending that the right of kings to such empire was divine. Every artifice, indeed, of chicane and sophistry was called in to the support of these maxims of law and theology. But the season for religious and civil liberty to prevail over the impotent attempts of each was at hand<sup>60</sup>.' That a large proportion of the members of our hierarchy, of our legislature, and of our courts of law, have been extremely hostile to the cause of civil liberty, the ingenious

53 'Men of timorous minds,' says a writer of a truly benevolent spirit, 'will suppress inquiry, lest conviction should endanger their comforts; they will continue indolent and ignorant, instead of laboring to know the truth; they will laugh away their time in trifles and impertinence, and sink into voluptuousness and ease: or they will affect a kind of clerical state, that flimsy veil, behind which ignorance is wont to conceal itself, and to challenge a character of wisdom.' Dyer on Subscription, 2d ed. p. 344.

59 From the first edition, printed for Millar, in one volume 8vo. in the year 1759.

60 P. 299.

author of the Dialogues was completely apprised. Speaking of the regal power in this country, he says, 'the language of parliaments, the decrees of lawyers, and the doctrines of divines, have generally run in favor of the HIGHEST exertions of prerogative<sup>61</sup>.'

What he observes in a subsequent page, with a reference to the arbitrary conduct of the Stuarts, and to the Revolution in 1688, which that conduct produced, may be applied to vindicate some of those measures of the French nation, which the priests and pensioners of England have most loudly reprobated. 'It too often happens, that when the evil is once removed, it is presently forgotten: and in matters of government especially, where the people rarely think till they are made to feel, when the grievance is taken away, the false system easily returns, and sometimes with redoubled force<sup>62</sup>.'

That Dr. Hurd entertained the most unfavorable ideas of the manners of a court, the following citation will I think decisively prove. It is taken from that dialogue, in which Mr. Cowley and Mr. Sprat are the speakers. 'My situation was such,' says Mr. Cowley, 'that I came to have a sort of familiarity with greatness. Yet shall I confess my inmost sentiments of this gilded life to you? I found it empty, fallacious, and even disgusting. The outside indeed was fair. But to me, who had an opportunity of looking it through, nothing could be more deformed and hateful. All was ambition, intrigue, and falshood. Every one intent on his own schemes, frequently wicked, ALWAYS

61 P. 236.

62 This single passage I have taken from the third edition; for it is there better expressed than in the first, vol. II. p. 99. This quotation from the prelate illustrates two important inquiries. Was the security of public liberty in France compatible with the preservation of its hierarchy and its different orders of noblesse? Had the French people any just grounds to fear, that the immense revenues, settled on the crown by the Constituent Assembly, would, at length, be employed in overturning the constitution they had established, and perhaps in forging chains yet more heavy and more galling than those which the national energy had broken?



base and selfish. Great professions of honor, of friendship, and of duty ; but all ending in low views and sordid practices.' ' Your ideas then of a court,' says Mr. Sprat, ' is that of A DEN OF THIEVES, only better dressed, and more civilized. That, said he, is the idea under which truth obliges me to represent it.—There are but two sorts of men, pursued he, that should think of living in a court, however it be that we see animals of all sorts, clean and unclean, enter into it. The one is, of those strong and active spirits that are formed for business, whose ambition reconciles them to the bustle of life, and whose capacity fits them for the discharge of its functions.—The other sort are what one may properly enough call, if the phrase were not somewhat uncourtly, the mob of courts ; they, who have vanity or avarice without ambition, or ambition without talents. These by assiduity, good luck, and the help of their vices (for they would scorn to earn advancement, if it were to be had, by any worthy practices) may in time succeed to the lower posts in a government ; and together make up that shewy, servile, selfish crowd we dignify with the name of a court.' ' I shall,' says Mr. Cowley, ' spend my time more innocently, at least, and, I presume to think, more usefully in—studies, than in that slippery *station*, if it may deserve to be called one, of court favor and dependence. And if I extended the observation to many others, that are fond to take up their residence in those quarters, I cannot believe I should do them any injustice.' But, resumed he, ' I intended no reflection on any of the clergy, and much less on the great prelates of the church, for *their* attendance in the courts of princes.—I cannot *enough admire the zeal* of so many pastors of the church, who, though the slavish manners and libertinism of a court must be more than ordinarily offensive to men of their characters, continue to discharge their office so *painfully*, and yet so *punctually*, in that situation.' But this encomium of the author of the Dialogues is not praise, but satire ; for he immedi-

ately adds in a note<sup>63</sup>, in a tone of irony: 'How amiable is this candor! Licentious men, on the other hand, draw strange conclusions. Bishop Burnet tells us of Lord Rochester, "that the aspirings he had observed at court of some of the clergy, with the servile ways they took to attain to preferment, had made him often think they suspected the things were not true, which, in their sermons and discourses they so carefully recommended." *Some Passages of the Life and Death of the Earl of Rochester*, p. 121. We see that this unhappy lord, observing abundance of clergymen about the court, and not penetrating the true reason of their attendance, fell into the uncharitable surmise, that, like his lay-acquaintance, THESE REVEREND PERSONS WERE THERE ONLY TO DO THEIR OWN BUSINESS<sup>64</sup>.'

In animadverting on the false notions, which many in this country have entertained in favor of the prerogatives of the monarchy, he says, unless these prejudices are corrected, 'there is *constant* reason to apprehend, not only that the royal authority may stretch itself beyond due bounds; but may grow, at length, into' an 'enormous tyranny<sup>65</sup>.' Whether bp. Hurd, since his assumption of the character of a legislator, being aware of the eagerness with which royalty grasps at every opportunity of enlarging its power, has shewn himself a friend to the independency of parliament; or whether, on the contrary he has discovered a readiness to forward the encroachments of the crown, and a servile acquiescence in the measures of the minister; let those decide, who are acquainted with the tenor of his lordship's parliamentary conduct.

That the author of the Dialogues, Moral and Political, was almost prepared to stand forward as the advocate of

63 I know not whether this curious note occurs in any but the first edition of the Dialogues. In the third and all the later editions it is prudently suppressed.

64 P. 57, 62, 76, 77

65 P. 178.

republicanism<sup>66</sup>, the following passage would seem to evince. 'Being used to consider all political power as coming originally from the people, it seems to me but fitting, that they should dispose of that power for their own use, IN WHAT HANDS, and UNDER WHAT CONDITIONS, they please<sup>67</sup>.'

In the Postscript to the first edition of his Dialogues, where he lays aside the style of dialogue, and attacks the recently published History of England by David Hume, Dr. Hurd speaks, still more unequivocally, like a warm and decided advocate of freedom. The preceding dialogues, says he, are 'so compounded as to afford a seasonable antidote to the poison of this new history.' We are told by the writer of it, "that in the particular exertions of power, the question ought never to be forgot, *what is best?* But in the general distribution, there can seldom be admitted any other question than *what is usual?*" *Were this true*, is that use to be estimated only from the immediately preceding times?—Shall a great people be so freely censured for looking back into their old charters; and, when so mighty a cause as that of liberty is pleading, shall they be rigorously tied up to the precedents of two or three reigns, when they could so easily defend themselves by alleging their elder usages, and by opposing to these novel encroachments the more reverend prescription of ages? At this rate I desire to know, how a free constitution could ever subsist, or at least preserve itself in any country? Ambition, Intrigue, Expediency, Neglect, and even Chance itself are constantly introducing, and for a time will frequently continue, infringements of a People's Rights. And shall usurpation, under the name of use, be

66 Dr. Parr, in contrasting the character of bp. Warburton and bp. Hurd, says of the former, 'he never thought it expedient,—to expiate the artless and animated effusions of his youth, by the example of a temporising and obsequious old age. He began not his course, as others have done, with speculative republicanism, nor did he end it, as the same persons are now doing, with practical torism.' *Tracts by Warburton and a Warburtonian, not admitted into the Collections of their Respective Works*, 1789, p. 156.

67 P. 188.

presently pleaded against the resumption of them? “ But whether these patriots were to blame, or no, for opposing *what was usual*, surely that family, who followed so reasonable a rule, or, in the historian’s language, who adhered to the ancient constitution, can be thought of deserving no great censure.” What, not for endeavoring to rivet those chains of servitude, which their predecessors had perhaps been kindly forging on the necks of their subjects? Not, for endeavoring to turn irregularities into precedent, and extravagancies into system, and so to enslave a mighty people beyond all hopes of redemption; a people, that had just before unanimously called this family to the throne, and whose liberties had been respected even in the highest exertions of former tyranny? The *causa regnandi*, which tyrants magnify so much, must surely, in the opinion of this political casuist, be a powerful excuse to justify these enormous attempts, and to cover the infamy of entailing so pestilent a mischief, as that of Civil Servitude, on the souls and bodies of their good subjects. “ Few examples,” he observes, “ occur of princes, who have willingly resigned their power. None of those who have, without a struggle, allowed it to be extorted from them.” *It may be so*; and, for the credit of princes, I am sorry for it.’ This postscript from which I have been tempted thus liberally to transcribe, as well on account of its rare occurrence, as its intrinsic excellence, the author of it concludes with the following presage: That ‘ Britons will never hereafter suffer the *least* encroachment on their (now, at least) constitutional Rights and Privileges; lest not only that indulgence should favor the introduction of tyranny, but (which is more provoking, though less terrible) lest it should give a handle to thankless men, grown wanton in the abuse of liberty, to calumniate the friends and benefactors of mankind, and to plead the cause of tyrants.’

His lordship of Worcester, it is true, has long acted in direct opposition to all such sentiments. But there is no mystery in the conduct of our prelate. The author of the



Dialogues was a private man. That author is now transformed into a lord of parliament. Besides, those who have read the first of his dialogues know, that no man is better acquainted than his lordship with the arguments, which a complying conscience may employ to quiet the scruples which might otherwise disturb it, and to gloss over any unmanly acts of inconsistency and insincerity; and that no one is better informed, how extremely convenient it is for him, who lives within the atmosphere of a court, and seeks the rising gale of prosperous fortune, to cultivate the arts of accommodation, and to make principle bend submissive before the glittering shrines of ambition and avarice. If we may trust likewise to the evidence of fact, the bishop of Worcester appears to have thought, that the sentiments, which he has put into the mouth of Mr. Waller, in the first of his dialogues, ought not silently to occupy the page of a book, but that they deserve to be acted upon on the stage of the world. That precept ought to be fortified by example, is, indeed, a truth, the authority of which is universal and undisputed.

Mr. Waller maintains, 'that sincerity,' I am now quoting the words of bp. Hurd, 'or a scrupulous regard to truth in all our conversation and behaviour, how specious soever it may be in theory, is a thing impossible in practice; that there is no living in the world on' such terms as these; 'and that a man of business must either quit the scene, or learn to temper the strictness of' the discipline of the philosopher 'with some reasonable accommodations.—Not a sullen and inflexible sincerity, but a fair and seasonable accommodation of one's self, to the various exigencies of the times, is the golden virtue, that ought to predominate in a man of life and business. All the rest, believe me, is the very cant of philosophy and unexperienced wisdom.—The humor of acting always on one principle was, I said to myself, like that of sailing with one wind: whereas the expert mariner wins his way by plying in all directions, as occasions serve, and making the best of all weathers.' The

pleas explicitly in favor of insincerity, which bp. Hurd<sup>68</sup> has exhibited to great advantage and at great length, and *which he has scarcely suffered to be combated by a single argument*, are thus concluded. ‘Take it from me as an oracle, which long age and experience enable me to deliver with all assurance. Whoever, in succeeding times, shall form himself on the plan here given, shall meet with the safety, credit, applause, and, if he chuses, honor and fortune in the world, which may be promised indeed, but never will be obtained, *by any other method*<sup>69</sup>.’ And certainly it will be readily conceded to the author of the Dialogues, that an observation of what is passing in the world, and an acquaintance with history, concur in informing us, that the brightest talents and the most solid learning are often suffered to languish in the shade of privacy and under the frowns of fortune; that very different qualifications, and such as are best taught in the school of the world, are far more requisite for such as aspire to the favor of statesmen and princes; and that by him who is pressing forward as a

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68 If any person should be of opinion, that I have censured the conduct of this learned prelate with too much freedom, I shall, in order to justify the style which I have employed, refer him to a passage written by the bishop himself. If the charges against him be admitted to be well founded, it will then perhaps be thought, that, if I have fallen into any fault, it is that I have urged them in too calm and soft a tone. ‘He leaves it to others,’ he says, ‘to the soft divine and courtly controversialist, to combat the most flagitious tenets with serenity; or maintain the most awful religious truths in a way, that misleads the unwary reader into an opinion of their making but little impression on the writer’s own heart. For himself he freely owns he is apt to kindle as he writes; and would even blush to repel an insult on sense and virtue with less vigor, than every honest man is expected to shew in his own case. *Rem. on Mr. David Hume’s Ess. on the Nat. Hist. of Rel.* 1777, p. 12. Of this pamphlet Mr. Hume justly says in *his Life* (he is politely called by Dr. Hurd ‘a Puny Dialectician from the North’), that it is written ‘with all the illiberal petulance, arrogance, and scurrility, which distinguish the Warburtonian school.’ The *entire* honor of having written this pamphlet the bishop of Worcester does not claim. The greater part of it was written by Warburton, and is inserted in bp. Hurd’s edition of his works.

69 P. 14, 20, 35, 37.

candidate for titles and preferment, a strict system of morals will assuredly be found to serve no other purpose, than to retard and to encumber.

Would his lordship of Worcester condescend to apply to the justification of his own conduct and his own consistency those arguments, by which he has so ingeniously, and with so much eloquence vindicated the insincerities and inconsistencies of Mr. Waller's life; he would certainly add new laurels to his literary fame, and be secure of awakening a more than usual degree of the public curiosity and attention. Scarcely is his lordship himself aware, till he undertakes it, how copious is the theme, and how numerous are the persons, within the sphere of his own observation, who have distinguished themselves by dexterity of deceit and flexibility of principle.

If, when a private man, he could frame such plausible pleas, by way of apology for dissimulation and a departure from principle, what may not be expected from him, now that he has so long possessed a seat in the house of lords and on the bench of bishops, where he has seen those arts of accommodation, and that versatility of principle, the advantages of which he displays, practised with the most unremitting perseverance, and the happiest success? Even to the most experienced proficients in duplicity such a work would be acceptable. To different members of the cabinet, to the dukes of Richmond and Portland, and to the prime minister of the country, it would be peculiarly interesting, executed, as it would be, with the greatest elegance of diction and variety of materials. And surely our prelate is too uniformly polite, and has too strong a sense of the propriety of accommodating himself to the wishes of his majesty's ministers, that he should discover the smallest reluctance to oblige or to entertain them. It would also be an object worthy of his distinguished talents, to endeavor to render political apostacy as fashionable in the lower ranks of society, as it already is in the higher.

His lordship is known to be animated by the love of fame. Let him then once more call forth his wonted energy, and be excited by it to apply the whole force of his genius, and the conclusions of his experience to a masterpiece of art, for the execution of which he is eminently qualified. Having long since attained to a *familiarity with greatness*; having long been acquainted with the interior of a palace, with its vices, its manners, and the cast of its conversation: let him complete his unfinished picture of a Court, which, though little more than an outline, is at once bold and correct, and plainly sketched by the hand of a master. Let him add to it those exquisite touches, which he who copies from life is alone capable of giving. It is true, he needs entertain no fears, lest the colors he has used should be evanescent, or lest the picture, in its present state, should be denied, by any honest and competent judge, to be a strong resemblance of the scene and the characters it was intended to represent. But numerous as are the figures which he has introduced into it, it will still admit the addition of new characters and new personages: harmonious as is the group of objects which he has portrayed, it is still possible for him to arrange them with greater skill and to more advantage: dark as is the coloring, and large as is the proportion of shade, still the former may with propriety be heightened, and the gradations of the latter may be yet more copiously scattered.



## CHAPTER XV.

## ON DANIEL'S PREDICTION OF THE FALL OF THE PAPACY.

ILLUSTRATIONS have been given of several prophecies, which, as they foretell the destruction of *all* ecclesiastical tyranny in Europe, of course include the demolition of the papal power. But there is a prediction, written by a prophet, who lived 600 years before the Christian æra, and in a peculiar manner enjoyed the favor of Almighty God<sup>1</sup>, which announces the latter event in particular.

Daniel, in describing his vision of the *four Beasts*, or the four great monarchies, which they symbolically represented, relates, that *the Fourth Beast had Ten Horns*, that is to say, the Fourth empire was divided into Ten Kingdoms, and that *there came up among them another little horn*, the emblem of the papacy. Of this he prophecies in the same chapter (ch. vii.) that in point of time he *shall rise after them*; that he *shall be diverse<sup>2</sup> from the other kings*; and having a *look more stout than his fellows*, shall *make war with the saints and prevail against them.—And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time. But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end.*

<sup>1</sup> *The Four Kings* (ver. 17),<sup>3</sup> says bp. Newton, ‘are not four single kings, but kingdoms; and so *the Ten Horns* or

1 See Dan. ix. 23; x. 11.

2 It will be *diverse* from other forms of government; i. e. it will be of an *ecclesiastical* nature.

3 Dan. ch. vii.

Kings (ver. 24), are not Ten single kings, but kingdoms ; and so likewise *the little Horn* is not a single king, but a kingdom, not a single man but a succession of men, exercising such powers, and performing such actions, as are here described<sup>4</sup>. ‘ This horn,’ says bp. Hallifax, ‘ was not to arise till after the Roman empire had been broken into many independent sovereignties : and it is an undoubted fact, notorious in history, that no sooner had that government, by means of the fierce and free nations of the North, experienced this fatal change, than the Roman church, taking advantage of such distractions, began to rear its head, and grow up to the full size and stature of *the man of sin*<sup>5</sup>.’ On many points Mr. Evanson differs in opinion from the prelates whom I have just quoted ; and the reader needs scarcely to be told, for he will collect it from the tenor of the passages which I before extracted from him, that he is extremely wary in applying any prophecies exclusively to the church or to the pontiffs of Rome. But the following citation from him will be sufficient to shew, that his sentiments on the recently cited prophecy of Daniel perfectly harmonise with the statements of bishops Newton and Hallifax. ‘ With respect to Daniel, it must be remarked, that if we except the celebrated prediction of the seventy weeks, the avowed objects of all his prophecies are the great revolutions of civil government under the four universal monarchies of Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome. It is therefore reasonable to conclude, that no circumstances are introduced by the prophet, but such as coincide, or are necessarily connected with the main scope of his predictions. Now since the Ten Horns of his fourth visionary Beast are declared to be emblems of the many separate kingdoms, into which this prophet, so many ages before the event, repeatedly foretold the European, Roman empire would be divided, it will readily be granted, that *the little horn* representing a temporal principality arising

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<sup>4</sup> Vol. I. p. 488.

<sup>5</sup> P. 92.

upon the ruins of some of the various governments, into which the body of the empire was at first broken, differing from the other kingdoms of the West, and though *little*, that is, inferior to the other principalities in power, yet assuming a tone and deportment more arrogant than any of them, blaspheming the Deity, and persecuting conscientious Christians, is a very just and exact type of the Roman hierarchy, and applicable to no other hierarchy upon earth, because none other ever acquired to itself an independent civil dominion<sup>6</sup>.’ As this prediction, ancient and concise as it is, has little need of a comment, none shall be given.

The destruction of *the little horn*, and the complete fulfilment of this memorable prophecy, it is likely, the present race<sup>7</sup> of men may have the opportunity of contemplating. The church of Rome has nearly ceased to dazzle her votaries. The sun of her prosperity has set for ever. The symptoms of a lingering consumption the papacy has long betrayed; the wound, received at the æra of the protestant reformation, it has never recovered; those weapons, which were once such a terror to its enemies, and which it wielded with such powerful effect, are now become in its hands blunt and harmless; it is indeed shrunk to a mere skeleton, when contrasted with the flourishing state in which it once appeared, in the days of its maturity and vigor; and, as its debility and decrepitude have, for some time past, been on the increase, to the eye of reason, its speedy dissolution appears among the events most reasonably to be expected. It is also far from being improbable, that external violence may be superadded to internal weakness. It is far from being improbable, that the republicans of France, before

6 Let. to bp. Hurd, p. 17.

7 This is probable with respect to *the papacy*. *The church of Rome*, it is to be expected, will survive her spiritual father, the Pope. To bishop Newton there appeared reason to believe, that the Roman pontiff would continue to persecute and to possess great power till about the year 2000. See vol. III. p. 379, 383. This opinion it is needless to combat, for at present it is little likely to be adopted.

any long period shall elapse, may strike a formidable blow at the papal power in the metropolis where its throne is erected<sup>8</sup>; and, if I may so express myself of the papacy, terminate the career of this hoary-headed sinner on the very spot, where the monster first drew breath, forged those chains by which Europe was enslaved, and formed those plans by which it was deluged with blood.

What! Some person will perhaps exclaim, as he peruses the beginning of the chapter, are *Four Beasts*, in the diction of scripture, the established representatives of as many celebrated monarchies? Are a series of sovereign princes, the vicegerents of the Deity as they are sometimes styled,—are *they* compared by those holy prophets, Daniel, and John, to the beasts of the forest? Is this the description of persons, to whom the Deity has thought proper to apply this emblem of dishonor? Let the opinion of a celebrated German and of three orthodox divines, of whom two are dignitaries belonging to the English hierarchy, be heard upon this point. ‘A *Beast* (or rather *wild Beast*, *Θηριον*), both in Daniel and here<sup>9</sup> says Bengelius<sup>10</sup>, ‘is the emblem of a series or succession of men exercising a lawless arbitrary power.’ Mr. William Lowth, prebendary of Winchester<sup>11</sup>, speaking of the four monarchies, says, they ‘were represented to Daniel under the shape of fierce and wild Beasts, as being the great supporters of idolatry and

8 Jurieu expresses his expectation, ‘that the Popes, being driven out of the rest of Europe, will shelter themselves among the Spaniards,’ vol. II. p. 230, 272. Dr. Gill, from the contemplation of prophecy, expresses his belief, that numerous armies will enter Italy, and produce there ‘a great REVOLUTION in church and state.’ But of its several separate states he specifies Savoy alone; and certainly, with respect to this country, his expectations, however unfounded in prophecy, have been completely realised. See a Sermon preached in Dec. 1752, from Ps. lxxxvii. 3. p. 14.

9 In Jeremiah also (xii. 9) we read of *the Beasts of the field*, i. e. says, the Targum, ‘the kings of the nations and their armies.’

10 His Marginal Annot, affixed to his Intr. to the Apoc. p. 13.

11 He was father of the learned and ingenious Dr. Rob. Lowth, late bp. of London.



tyranny in the world.' By bishop Newton it is observed, that 'they are denominated beasts for their tyrannical and cruel oppressions, and depredations<sup>12</sup>;' and the learned Daubuz, speaking of the Ten-horned Beast in particular, which is, he observes, emblematic of 'the Ten Monarchies,' says, we should translate *Θηριον*, '*a Wild Beast*, that we may express the true signification of the Greek word, and the nature of the symbol; it being certain, that this Beast is represented as partaking of the nature of the wildest. *A wild beast* is a proper symbol<sup>13</sup> to express a tyrannical, usurping power, that destroys its neighbors or subjects, and preys upon all about it<sup>14</sup>.'

Indeed it will be generally acknowledged, that if the whole compass of the natural world were explored to discover an apt comparison, it would be this, when applied to the tyrannical princes of *ancient* times, accustomed to acts of violence, eager to plunder all who come within their power, and delighting in war and the shedding of blood. It ought, however, to be observed, in justice to the lion, that all his personal qualities are not to be attributed to them. Far

12 Vol. I. p. 442. A Mr. Tho. Willes, in a book printed in 1655, has, though within the compass of a few lines, placed these ideas in several striking points of view. 'Oppressors,' says he, 'are wont to prey upon the poor, as the stronger beasts upon the weaker, the greater fowls and fishes upon the lesser. They are the leeches of the commonwealth, which suck the blood out of its veins; the suckers which spring from the roots of the trees, and draw away the sap from the otherwise fruitful branches.' The following quotation is from a modern nobleman. 'It is as much of the nature of kings and ministers to invade and destroy the rights of the people, as it is of foxes and weasels to rife a poultry-yard, and destroy the poultry. All of them, therefore, ought to be muzzled.' *Life of Andrew Fletcher* by the Earl of Buchan, 1792, p. 50.

13 According to the *Oneirocritics*, says Dr. Lancaster, '*Wild Beasts* are generally the symbols of enemies, whose malice and power is to be judged of, in proportion to the nature and magnitude of the wild beasts they are represented by.' And have not kings, their antitype, in like manner too often been the *enemies* of mankind? Solomon says, as a *roaring lion*, and a *ranging bear*, so is a *wicked ruler over the poor people*. Prov. xxviii. 15.

14 P. 552.

were they from possessing that undaunted courage, that clemency, that generosity, that magnanimity, by which he is acknowledged to be distinguished among his fellow quadrupeds. Should it be granted, upon the ground of its antecedent *probability*, as well as the evidence of existing facts, that the arbitrary princes of modern Europe have altogether changed their nature; and that *they*, in no respect, resemble the tyrants of antiquity, but on the contrary, that they are characterised by all the generous dispositions of the lion, without retaining any that are mischievous and malignant; yet some persons will be ready to suspect, that these latter ages have not been entirely free from the calamities which the ancient world endured. Among an excessively privileged nobility, like many of those formerly employed in the pillage of the people of France, not a few may possibly be regarded as noxious animals, who, though of an inferior size and a less pampered growth, have however consumed far more than has naturally or properly fallen to their share. The titled conspirators of Coblenz in particular, some of whom the empress of Russia has invited to colonize a portion of her wide-spreading wastes, may, perhaps, as well from their conduct as their dispositions, be considered as no unsuitable associates for the less dangerous savages, that wander at large in the regions allotted for their reception. But let it not be supposed, that, by the incidental introduction of the imperial Catharine, any indirect imputation is intended to be cast upon the mildness and purity of her character. To the Poles, to the inhabitants of a country once more extensive than France, the question may be confidently referred; and it may be asked, whether they have not repeatedly received from her the most decisive proofs of her pacific dispositions, and the readiness with which she ever interposes her good offices. Let it not then be suspected, to use an expression of Mr. Gibbon, that ‘the sovereign of the Russian deserts’ bears the most faint resemblance to the beasts of prey that inhabit them. In order to refute the charge, will it not be sufficient to give a brief description of the principal qualities,

and of the general conduct, of the latter ; and to inquire, whether they are at all applicable to any *modern* princes of any European dynasty?

Greedy of spoil, and incessantly thirsting after blood, the beasts of the forests carry on perpetual hostilities against the human race ; when feebly resisted, they have a powerful influence in the gradual depopulation of the territory, in which they reside ; and wherever they extend their depredations, they, alas ! make no distinction of age, or sex, or merit. Possessed of the most formidable strength, they disdain all restraint. But they nevertheless not unfrequently have recourse to concealment and to art. Of darkness also they are naturally fond. When they have exerted their art and their strength with success ; when they have obtained an opportunity of multiplying their massacres, and have been capable of spreading their ravages, without disturbance and without danger, over the *widest* extent of country ; then it is, that they exult with a barbarous joy, destined, indeed, quickly to be allayed by the insatiable nature of their desires. With respect to desires of a different description, those of a sensual kind, these are strengthened by the most *unlimited* indulgence. In the gratification of them, they commonly display an equal degree of coarseness and inconstancy ; and any permanent attachments between the male and female of the tribe are unusual phenomena.

Though they should be clothed in a dress alike splendid and beautiful, and some of them should occasionally assume a look of peace and gentleness, these are circumstances, which authorise no diminution of dread or suspension of vigilance.

If you value your safety, the ordinary circle of their predatory excursions should not be approached by you ; for, when you have once entered within the confines of the region which they annoy, you expose yourself to the probability of an attack. Have they fixed their eye upon you ? Alas ! It will probably be equally vain to fly or to resist. Being

of unbounded rapacity, they do, though of the same tribe, seldom agree among themselves. But, although they are naturally solitary animals, unsusceptible of friendship and undeserving of confidence, these devourers of mankind, notwithstanding their mutual jealousy, have, in some circumstances, *associated together*, that they might the more effectually seize upon their prey. As they cherish the most malignant dispositions, and are early inured to acts of rapine and slaughter; they are rarely tamed by the most careful or judicious course of discipline: and extremely few are the instances which have occurred, of their being rendered docile or useful. Though by no means strangers to the colder climes, the countries of Asia and Africa they infest in the greatest numbers, and it is there that they meet with the feeblest opposition.

Extending over so large a portion of the globe, possessed of dispositions thus incorrigible, armed with power thus fatally destructive, possibly some may urge, that they ought to be hunted down, and driven from their dens, though the latter should appear to be inaccessible and to bid defiance to attack. And if this work *be* as salutary<sup>15</sup> as it is difficult, some perhaps may be ready to maintain, that those, who shall undertake the hazardous enterprise of subduing these scourges of the human race, are entitled to receive from them in return their assistance and gratitude<sup>16</sup>! Whilst the

15 Isocrates having observed, that *τον πολεμον αγαλκαιοτατον μεν και δεκαιοτατον, τον μετα παντων ανθρωπων προς την αγριότητα των θηριων γενομενον*; adds, that the next in point of justice and necessity is against those of the human race, *της και φυσει πολεμις ανρας, και παντα τον χρονον επιβλενουσας ημιν*. To whom does this best apply? Orai. Panathenaica.

16 France, we are informed by Buffon and other naturalists, was greatly infested, some years since, by different noxious animals, and particularly by wolves; but the inhabitants have deserved well of society, by the zeal they have shewn in expelling them.

The right of driving them away, in all cases, when they shew themselves bent upon plunder, I regard not as *questionable*. To the inhabitants of any particular district, who have recently freed themselves from their destructive depredations, and defeated all their endeavors to renew them, though



former are indefatigable in their devastations, will it not be asked in a tone of surprise, shall mankind continue idle ;

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they may have been assisted by other stronger savages of a foreign growth, a question of *expediency* does, however, occur, when they are apprised, that these ferocious plunderers still meditate a repetition of their joint attacks ; and it may then become an enquiry of no small difficulty, what mode of opposition the most enlightened policy would recommend. If, impelled by a generous ardor, they press forward in pursuit of the baffled and retreating foe, *far* beyond the limits of their own territory ; if, before a general arming has taken place, they attack, at the same time, and in several different quarters, not only the smaller animals of a ravenous kind, the natives of their own clime, but the strongest and the most carnivorous, whom the scent of prey has allured to the combat ; and if when they enter, *in these circumstances*, into the neighbouring territories, they enter with an intention of hunting down those more formidable savages, who glut themselves with blood and plunder, before the people of those territories are sufficiently resolute and well informed to afford them substantial aid ; it may, I think be doubted, whether their conduct were sufficiently guided by maxims of prudence.

But to illustrate my meaning, and to prevent it from being mistaken, I will, for a moment, imagine myself an inhabitant of ancient Europe, as it was thirty centuries since, when the beasts of the forest possessed almost an undisturbed dominion. I will, for a moment, suppose, that they are extremely numerous ; that they associate together in large companies, in Hispania, Belgium, and different parts of Italia and Germania ; and that they not only carry on their ravages in these countries, the inhabitants of which are unarmed, ignorant of their interests, and destitute of union, but that they threaten to lay waste the populous provinces of Gaul ; in these circumstances the Gauls, I apprehend, if the magnitude of the danger required it, should maintain a vigorous *Defensive System*.

But if they possess a well-grounded confidence in their own skill and numbers, a difference of circumstances will undoubtedly authorise a different conduct. If they do quit their own country, if they do chase the enemy beyond their own frontier, policy will probably direct them principally to bend their force to two or three points, where their danger is most eminent. By great and *concentered* exertions they might not only clear the country for a time, but maintain their ground in it, till the inhabitants needed not their support.

On the supposition that they are strong enough, they would thus render their danger more remote, whilst they generated a salutary terror. Thus the foes of mankind, alarmed at the progress they have made, will either speedily relinquish projects of so hopeless an aspect, or will gradually exhaust their resources in unavailing efforts of malevolence and hostility.

shall they take no precautions for their security; still neglecting to unite together against the common enemy, shall they successively yield themselves up unresisting victims?

Since the word *boast* occurs in almost every page of Daniel and the Apocalypse, I may be the rather pardoned this long digression; though it must be confessed, that I have done little more than amplify on the words of the bishop of Bristol and the prebendary of Winchester. It may be added, that, in a country where Liberty is universally granted to be one of the greatest of human blessings, no man, professing himself an admirer of the *limited* monarchy of England, can, consistantly with his principles, be displeased to see the detestable conduct of tyrannical princes painted in the strongest colors, or their overthrow shewn to be probable from passages of the prophets.

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## CHAPTER XVI.

ON THE GENERAL COURSE OF FUTURE EVENTS, AND PARTICULARLY ON THE PREDICTION OF THE WAR OF ARMAGEDDON.

RESERVING what I have to say on the actual FALL of despotism, for some of the following chapters, I shall appropriate this to some of those important events, which are subsequent to the figurative *earthquake in the Tenth Part of the city*, and, belonging to the period of the seventh trumpet, are expected to precede and to hasten that fall.

An old English divine, of the name of Tillinghast, supposes, from attention to prophecy, that, antecedently to the destruction of the Ten Kings and of Antichrist, the world will be enlightened. The earth, says he, 'was before in darkness, and thought nothing of the ruin of Rome and judging of the Beast.' But, 'adds the preacher, the Lord lets in wonderful light into the world, and then presently comes forth the work itself; the Lord doth appear judging

of the Beast<sup>1</sup>. One of the passages to which he refers is the 1st verse of the xviiiith chapter. Immediately previous to his prediction of the fall of Babylon, St. John says, *and after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened* (or rather *enlightened*<sup>2</sup>) *with his glory*. The explication that follows is from Brenius. He says, ‘that the inhabitants of the earth should be illuminated by the brightness of the knowledge<sup>3</sup>, which that angel shall diffuse in the world.’ Now angels are constantly represented in the apocalyptic visions as performing that, which is accomplished by the operation of natural causes alone. Since ‘other angels,’ says Daubuz, ‘often appear in these visions without mention of any such adjunct of *light* and *glory* enlightening the earth, we may easily conclude, it is the design of the Holy Ghost, that this *light* should be a necessary symbol in this place, importing what is symbolically represented by *light*.’ Now, as I conceive, that it is here the symbol of knowlege, and as the angel here spoken of plainly relates the execution of events, which are to happen under the seventh trumpet, the meaning of the latter clause appears to be, that, in the period of the seventh trumpet, the earth shall be enlightened by knowlege; and the connexion intimates, that upon this depends the overthrow of the symbolic Babylon. Daniel, speaking of *the time of the end*<sup>4</sup>, has these memorable words, *Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased*<sup>5</sup>. They shall run to and fro, ‘that is,’ says Dr.

1 His Eight Last Serm. printed in 1656, p. 62, 80.

2 This is the rendering of Mr. Wakefield and of Dr. Symonds (Obs. on the Epist. of the N. T. p. 80).

3 Δοξα, says Brenius, is put *pro splendore notitie*.

4 He is speaking of the end of the *αιων*, the period of the world that is now present, which reaches from the æra when Christianity was published to the Millennium. That time is considered, in the eye of prophecy, as divided into several large and eminent periods, will be shewn in ch. xxvii.

5 XII. 4

More<sup>6</sup>, 'be inquisitive, and hunt after truth.' 'It is only,' says a distinguished writer (with a reference to this verse), 'by *running to and fro*, that is, by diligent inquiry, by free discussion, and the collision of different sentiments, that knowlege can be increased, truth struck out, and the dignity of our species promoted<sup>7</sup>.'

By the progress of knowlege, and especially by the spread of political knowlege, the greatest effects may certainly be expected to be produced. To this the mighty Revolutions of America and France are to be attributed. The experience of ages has taught us, that, without it, nations may be oppressed century after century, and that all their struggles will subserve no other purpose, than to create a change of tyrants. But the diffusion of light and liberty throughout the European continent must necessarily be gradual and a work of time. Thus Jurieu, after observing that the authority of the Roman pontiffs was renounced by a part of Germany in the year 1520, by Denmark and Sweden in 1525, and by England in 1534, says, 'in the same manner, without doubt, will the Reformation that we expect be carried on. All those countries, that remain under the papal empire, will not *fall off* all at the same time: this shall be done in the space of several years<sup>8</sup>.'

I now transcribe the words of a great philosopher. 'Considering the amazing improvements in natural knowlege which have been made within the last century, and the many ages, abounding with men who had no other object besides study, in which, however, nothing of this kind was done, there appears to me to be a very particular providence

6 Com. on Dan. in loc.

7 Dr. Price's Ser. delivered before the supporters of the New Acad. Instit. p. 28. The clause, *many shall run to and fro*, some have explained in a different manner. 'This prophecy,' says Dr. Worthington, 'hath been remarkably fulfilled in these latter ages; commerce and navigation having opened a free intercourse between the different parts and nations of the world, whereby there hath been a mutual communication of all useful knowlege.' Vol. I. p. 239.

8 Vol. II. p. 230.



in the concurrence of those circumstance which have produced so great a change ; and I cannot help flattering myself, that this will be instrumental in bringing about other changes in the state of the world, of much more consequence to the improvement and happiness of it. This rapid process of knowlege, which, like the progress of a wave of the sea, of sound, or of light from the sun, extends itself not this way or that way only, but *in all directions*, will, I doubt not, be the means, under God, of extirpating all error and prejudice, and of putting an end to all undue and usurped authority in the business of religion, as well as of science ; and all the efforts of the interested friends of corrupt establishments of all kinds will be ineffectual for their support in this enlightened age ; though, by retarding their downfall, they may make the final ruin of them more complete and glorious. It was ill policy in Leo X. to patronise polite literature. He was cherishing an enemy in disguise<sup>9</sup>.

That the spread of knowlege will prepare and facilitate the way for the general establishment of fair and equal government, most will be disposed to believe. But the way will only be prepared. In accomplishing these great changes force will intervene. To be persuaded of this, we have only to look abroad into the world, and the sacred pages of the Jewish and of the Christian prophets we need not to consult. After France shall have ceased to constitute a part of the antichristian empire, says Jurieu, '*the Beast and the false Prophet*, the pope and his agents, shall rally all their forces : but God shall muster all his together, and give the last blow to popery : then *the Beast and the False Prophet* shall be thrown into *the lake*, and plunged into the bottomless pit<sup>10</sup> : Babylon shall wholly fall, and it shall be said, *she is fallen, she is fallen* <sup>11</sup>.' The antichristian empire, consisting of the Roman pontiff and the Ten Kings, Jurieu elsewhere asserts, ' shall fall with noise, wars, trou-

<sup>9</sup> Priestly *on Air*, 1790, pref. p. 22.

<sup>10</sup> That this clause should be understood literally, was certainly not the design of Jurieu. See vol. II. p. 273.

<sup>11</sup> Vol. II. p. 276.

bles, effusion of blood<sup>12</sup>;' and, in a subsequent chapter of his work, he declares it to be the *unanimous* opinion of interpreters, 'that, in the ruin of the antichristian kingdom there shall be great effusion of blood<sup>13</sup>.'

Whilst the despots of the European continent have been stretching every nerve to crush liberty, they have perhaps, in fact, been digging the grave of despotism. Is it not probable, that the violence of their efforts and their extraordinary military preparations will exhaust the strength, which still remains in the monarchies of the continent, now that they are debilitated by age, and betray the marks of their past excesses? Is there not a point, beyond which the oppression of the people cannot be carried? May it not be expected, that, in other countries besides France, the income of the nation, in spite of every expedient, will at length sink below the expenditure of the crown? 'Princes and states,' says a famous prelate, 'may have nothing less in view than to fulfil the prophecies of sacred scripture: yet, when the appointed time is come, they *will* certainly fulfil them<sup>14</sup>' 'Canst thou,' says a celebrated divine of the last century, 'hinder the rain from descending upon the earth, when it is falling; Canst thou stop the Sun from rising at its appointed hour? Will the conception for thee dwell quietly in the womb beyond its month? Surely thou mayest with far more ease turn and stop the current and course of nature, than obstruct the bringing in of the kingdom of Christ in righteousness and peace<sup>15</sup>.'

12 Vol. II. p. 59.

13 Vol. II. p. 234.

14 Hurd on Proph. vol. II. p. 59. 'Ask the princes of this world,' says the same writer, '*what prompts them* to disturb the peace of other states, and to involve their subjects in all the horrors of war; and their answer, if any design to give one, and if it be ingenuous, must, commonly, be, their lust of conquest and dominion.' Sermons preached at Lincoln's Inn by Rich. Hurd, D. D. vol. I. p. 127.

15 From a Sermon of Dr. Owen, originally printed in 1649, See a *Complete Collection of his Sermons*, fol. 1721, p. 338. The passage above, considering the period at which it was written, has more than common elegance.

‘In the ordinary wars which nations have waged,’ says a recent writer, ‘they have, perhaps, lost one hundred thousand lives, and slaughtered as many of their enemies; countries have been laid waste, and taxes incurred to the oppression of the industrious; but in other respects they may have sat down much as they were; but, if the present contest be what there is reason to suspect it; not merely a *war of man against man*; but of God against *antichristian usurpations and oppressions*, the issue to those who oppose his designs must be different<sup>16</sup>.’

I now pass to a very remarkable prediction, already alluded to which distinctly announces a military combination of divers European kings against the happiness of mankind. As the exact time is not marked out, it remains to be illustrated by the Event. It is plain, however, from its situation in ch. xvi. that it is to be accomplished during the period of the seven vials: it is plain, that the confederacy is to be planned and completed, and that the war is to be commenced, prosecuted, and concluded, whilst they are pouring out.

But, previously to citing it, I shall allege one or two preliminary observations. The first, which is from Daubuz, there has before been occasion to cite. ‘Wherever *the Beast and False Prophet* are named, by the *Beast* must be understood the former with *seven heads and ten horns*; and by *the False Prophet*,’ the ‘*Beast with two horns*<sup>17</sup>.’ Now

16 The Signs of the Times, p. 42. Mr. Bicheno is speaking of the present war against France. When it is recollected, that THE EMPEROR OF GERMANY, THE KINGS OF ENGLAND, PRUSSIA, SPAIN, PORTUGAL, SARDINIA, and THE TWO SICILIES, together with THE REPUBLIC OF HOLLAND, and the numerous PRINCES OF GERMANY, are ALL at war with France; it must be acknowledged, that the present confederacy of so many European potentates against a single nation struggling for the establishment of its liberties and independence, is an event, altogether unprecedented in the annals of mankind.

17 On ch. xiii. 11. That the *two-horned Beast*, says Mr. Whiston, ‘is the same that is also styled *the False Prophet*, is evident by their description compared together; and by consent of interpreters of the Apocalypse, even as early as the times of Irenæus,’ p. 65. That they are the same, is, says Vitringa, ‘a matter placed beyond all doubt.’ In Apoc. xvi. 13.

it has been already seen, that the former of these is the representative of the antichristian princes who inhabit the Western part of the Roman empire, and that the latter is emblematic of the members of the antichristian priesthood. And if *the Dragon* be mentioned as joined with them in a great confederacy it must signify such antichristian potentates, as have entered into the confederacy, but do not constitute a part of the proper ten-horned Beast. Such for instance may be the empress of Russia, the king of Prussia and some of the princes of Germany, who reign over territories that lie out of the bounds of the Western Roman empire.

St. John commences the passage by alluding to those partisans of the princes, who provoke the war, and employ themselves with activity in concerting the general alliance. It is as follows: *and I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the Dragon, and out of the mouth of the Beast, and out of the mouth of the False Prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto, or, as I think it ought rather to be translated, among<sup>18</sup> the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.—And he gathered them together into a place, called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.*

In the first of these verses, St. John has wrapped up his meaning under the cover of prophetic emblems. In the next, he changes his style; and employing phraseology for the most part plain and unfigured, proceeds to explain the reason, why he had described the emissaries as *coming out of the mouth of the Dragon and the Beast*. For, says he, *they go forth among the kings of the earth and of the whole world<sup>19</sup>*. To these two verses a remark of bp. Newton is

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18 It may be seen in the lexicons, that *among* is one of the senses of *ἐν*, which is the preposition here employed.

19 *They go forth among βασιλεῖς τῆς γῆς*, the princes of the Roman empire in Europe, and not only among them, but also among those *τῆς οὐκισ-μενῆς*, the princes who rule in other territories of the civilized part of the world. The former are denoted by the ten-horned Beast; the latter by



applicable. 'It is customary with the prophets, after they have described a thing in the most symbolical and figurative diction, to represent the same again in plainer language<sup>20</sup>.' This episode is introduced between the sixth and the seventh vials. With a reference to the expression, *and I saw*<sup>21</sup>, Daubuz says, 'This is a fresh vision, that is, the vision of a fresh matter different from the former, and therefore hath this fresh mark of attention. The Holy Ghost has here followed the method observed before in those parts of the vision, which are distinguished by seven epochas: namely, to have an episode or parenthesis discovering some collateral and remarkable accidents, which seem not to follow the same kind of matters, and could not be so well placed elsewhere; and this is done constantly after the sixth epocha.' But there is another reason, more weighty than mere precedent, to account why this episode is placed just before the description of the seventh vial. Though the confederacy of princes which it announces may be supposed to exist during the effusion of the most early of the vials, and the war conducted by them may continue to be carried on while the six first are pouring out; there nevertheless appears to be a manifest propriety, why it should be inserted immediately before the seventh, because it is descriptive of those great events, which are the

the Dragon. *Οικουμένη*, here translated *world*, St. Luke employs in a restricted sense; and it is agreed on all hands, that it must here also have a very limited import.

20 On ch. vi. 15. This, says Vitranga (in Jer. xxiv. 21), is customary in Isaiah and the other prophets. In like manner Daubuz (on Rev. ch. xiv. 20, where an instance of this occurs) says, 'it is frequently to be observed in the prophets, that they begin with a metaphorical or symbolical expression, and presently after go on with the literal.' Other examples of this, such as incidentally occur, Dan. vii. 13, 14; Joel iii. 13; Haggai ii. 21, 22; Mat. xxiv. 30; Luke xxi. 27; Rev. vi. 2; and 12—15, will hereafter be cited.

21 'It is no just objection, that a new subject is supposed to begin with the conjunction *and*; for this is frequent in the style of the Hebrews.' Bp. Newton, vol. III. p. 190. In the book of Revelation particularly it is often thus introduced.

foundation, and indeed the immediate cause, of the mighty Revolution foretold in the last of the vials.

The persons spoken of in this episode are represented as *coming out of the mouth of the Dragon*, &c. and this, says Daubuz, is a symbol of decorum, because they are said to be *spirits*. Of the passage that follows from this author a part has before been cited. ‘*The mouth*,’ he says, ‘is the organ of speech, and *words* in the sacred style are the same as commands and actions, because they imply the effects of the thoughts.—*To come out of the mouth* therefore signifies to be constituted and commanded; to become an agent or minister, under a superior power.’ Accordingly those mentioned in the verse under consideration are, he adds, such agents<sup>22</sup>, as execute the commands of those, ‘out of whose mouth they are said to come.’ Though they are, says Vitringa, a numerous body of men, they are spoken of as if they were only *three*, because *the Dragon*, *the Beast*, and *the False Prophet*, from whom they proceed, are three in number.

Since *the False Prophet* is mentioned, it is plain, that the war of Armageddon shall be some war, which shall not only be distinguished by an extraordinary confederacy of princes, but which shall also meet with the marked approbation of the ecclesiastical orders; a war, which the great body of priests, in the different hierarchies, shall be active to kindle, and zealous to promote. Dr. Lancaster, speaking of the emissaries who *go forth among the kings of the earth*, says<sup>23</sup>, ‘by their persuasion and endeavors, a war will be at last entered upon by the antichristian powers, in which *the Beast* and *False Prophet*, or the said powers civil

22 They are, says an old English annotator, ‘ambassadors or agents, called *spirits* for their subtilty and activity.’ *Apocal. Myst.* by H. K. Part II. p. 28. Mr. Cradock entitles them ‘wicked emissaries, negotiators, and solicitors;’ and Brightman, in the language which was current a century and a half ago, says of them, ‘these bellows of troubles, and war-making furies, shall leave nothing undone, that they may set the whole world in a combustion.’

23 In his Abridgment of Daubuz’s Commentary

and ecclesiastical, will meet with a final destruction. This will be a time when the power and dominion of God will be in a most extraordinary manner made manifest.' ' *The great Day of God*,' says Daubuz, ' signifies that time, wherein God by remarkable and glorious acts vindicates his honor upon wicked men.—One of the most remarkable of all which occasions will be that wherein he shall destroy *the Beast and False Prophet*.—The title of *Almighty*—is not useless in this case, but implies, that they shall be therein destroyed, God being on such occasions resolved to exert and demonstrate the plenitude of his power. Such a day therefore does not signify a short space of time, but indefinitely as much time as God thinks fit to employ therein, be it never so long<sup>24</sup>.'

The word *Armageddon* alludes, says Vitringa, to the *Valley of Megiddo*, which is mentioned in the book of Chronicles and in the prophecy of Zechariah<sup>25</sup>. Indeed, says Lowman, Megiddo, being ' famous in the history of God's people for several memorable slaughters, because a proverbial expression for *a place of destruction and mourning*.' The commentators accordingly observe, that it here signifies such a place; and Vitringa declares, that it without doubt points to some great plain situated in Europe, wherein the two parties are to be engaged together. The defeat at Armageddon, says this eminent commentator, will cause the mightiest changes, and draw after it the downfall of the antichristian empire, as is most clearly evident from the succeeding prophecy. ' *The battle of Armageddon*,' says Mede, ' shall give an end to the antichristian sovereignty<sup>26</sup>.' But it is not to a single engagement, but to a war, in which a succession of battles are to be fought, that the prediction of St. John probably refers; for the word

<sup>24</sup> The word *Day* often comprehends a ' succession of time, in which a whole series of events is transacted.' Mr. Lowth on Jer. xxx. 7. The word *Day* is, in the Hebrew notion, used ordinarily for *tempus*, yea *longissimum*: as in the prophets, for the Seventy years captivity.' Mede, p. 945.

<sup>25</sup> 2 Chron. xxxv. 22. Zech. xii. 11.

<sup>26</sup> P. 739.

translated *battle* signifies more properly a *war*, and it has been seen, that that other word, *day*, standing in connexion with it, is perfectly reconcileable with this notion. The genuine force of *πολεμος*<sup>27</sup> has not escaped the ingenious Mr. Lowman. ‘Whoever,’ says he, ‘the *three unclean spirits* are,—they seem plainly to intimate some powerful league or CONFEDERACY, by which the principal Popish Powers<sup>28</sup> shall be engaged with all their forces *in some war*, in which they shall be totally overthrown, and which shall end in their final destruction, as seems to be more fully expressed in the description of the seventh vial or last cup.’ If Mr. Lowman apprehended, that these coalesced princes would be such only as profess popery, he would have found it a task of no small difficulty to have assigned any valid reason for drawing such a line of distinction. The expression, *the kings of the earth*, is general, and appears to be no farther restricted, than to the European quarter of the world. They *go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world*, i. e. says Paganus, ‘of the whole Roman dominion, as we read of Augustus, that he *taxed all the world*’<sup>29</sup>, Luke 2. Among these are perhaps comprehended all those kings and princes, that heretofore were under the Roman jurisdiction, but have renounced the Romish religion: for certainly, amongst them also, all things are not so very well<sup>30</sup>.

It is said in v. 16, *and he gathered them*, that is, says Mr. Cradock in his paraphrase, ‘God by his all-wise providence permitted it so to be.’ To the same purpose Mr. Brightman. ‘Whatsoever the kings of the earth aimed at, God’s secret providence shall so guide and over-rule them, that whatsoever destruction they devise and intend to bring upon others, it should fall upon themselves.’ ‘It

<sup>27</sup> Πολεμος, says Constantine, *differt a μαχα, quemadmodum apud Latinos bellum a prælio.*

<sup>28</sup> Who are the principal Popish Powers? Austria and Spain.

<sup>29</sup> Οικουμενη is the word employed by Luke.

<sup>30</sup> P. 227.



is worthy of remark,' says Mr. Bicheno, 'that these foul *spirits* are to go forth unto *the kings* of the earth, and not to *the people*, which seems to indicate that it will be a war, in which kings will be more interested than mankind at large.' The prophet says of them, that '*they are the spirits of devils working miracles*. No one supposes these to be real miracles. This figurative language is used to set forth the impostures, lies, and frauds, with which they deceive men, and draw them into their destructive measures<sup>31</sup>.' They are represented under the emblem of *frogs*. Now the symbolic meaning of frogs we learn from Artemidorus, whose words I shall cite as translated by Daubuz. '*Frogs* signify impostors and flatterers, and bode good to them that get their living out of the common people<sup>32</sup>.'

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## CHAPTER XVII.

### ON THE SYMBOLIC HARVEST AND VINTAGE.

THE sixth rule, which Dr. Lancaster lays down in his Abridgment of Daubuz's Preliminary Discourse, as an aid in the interpretation of prophecy, is thus expressed: '*when the things to be prophesied of in the Revelation are to be considered in several views, there is a change of symbols*.' The reason is, says Dr. Lancaster, that as the symbols of prophecy must bear a certain analogy to each other, and must preserve throughout a certain decorum, it is impossible, that the same strain of symbols should represent all that variety of circumstances, which it is sometimes expedient to introduce. 'And, therefore, when the matters require that they should be considered under another aspect, the strain of the symbols must change, and the scene of the visions alters; so that *many* symbols may be used to denote the same thing in different respects. Now

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31 Signs of the Times, p. 50.

32 L. II. c. 15.

there are placed such inward marks, which belong to every part of a vision ; that we may thereby discover how the matters of that vision are related to the rest. Thus we find what is antecedent and consequent, or what is only collateral ; and so it appears what visions and their parts synchronise, and what do not. By this method what was before treated of succinctly is enlarged upon, and more fully demonstrated. So that the Revelation is not wrote in the way of *annalists*, who, being content to reduce all matters to a chronological series, only relate briefly what happens every year, without enlarging upon the intrigues or causes of the events, and omitting for the most part the consequences ; but in the way of the more *judicious historians*, who endeavor to give a full account of every matter as they take it in hand, in order to make a complete system of the whole ; interposing digressions, and then returning to the principal matters, by giving such hints and transitions, as suffice to let us understand to what they belong, and how, as to point of time, they come in or end with the rest.—And this is the method, not only of the most exact histories and discourses, but in a special manner that of all the inspired writers ; in whom the conjunctive particles do rather import, that one passage comes to be *related* after another, than that it was really *transacted* after it."

Thus the wars, in which the tyrants of the European world are to be subdued, with their widely scattered partisans, being of such mighty influence in deciding the condition of the human race, are foretold, in several parts of the Apocalypse, and under different emblems. Such appears to be the import of THE HARVEST and THE VINTAGE, described in the xivth chapter.

It is said in v. 15 and 16, *the harvest of the earth*, or the antichristian part of mankind, *is ripe. And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth : and the earth was reaped.* An ' *harvest* in several parts of scripture

denotes,' says Dr. Lancaster, some 'destroying judgment, by which people fall as corn by the scythe.' It 'is sometimes metaphorically used,' observes Mr. Lowth, 'to signify an entire destruction, because the harvest makes a clear riddance, and leaves the fields empty and bare<sup>2</sup>.' And Vitringa, speaking of the words just cited from St. John, says, 'the clearest arguments demonstrate, that *the harvest* is to be explained of some judgment of God of a general kind, by which he would take a severe vengeance on the enemies of the church and the adversaries of his people.'

In v. 17 an *angel* is represented as *having a sharp sickle*; and the command given unto him (v. 18) is, *thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe. And the angel* (v. 19) *thrust in his sickle<sup>3</sup> into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great wine-press of the wrath of God.* Of the symbols of the prophets some were borrowed from the customs of Judæa. Thus, says bp. Hurd, 'to tread a wine-press, from their custom of pressing grapes, signifies destruction attended with great slaughter<sup>4</sup>.' 'The wine-press is called *great*,' says Daubuz, 'because this is not a partial but general punishment.' That this prediction of the vintage alludes to the war of Armageddon, is observed, among other commentators, by Mede<sup>5</sup> and More, by Durham, Cressener<sup>6</sup>, and Peganius. Vitringa, indeed, declares it to be the opinion of *all* the best interpreters, that it is a prophecy of the great slaughter which is then to take place.

Nothing, says this great commentator, is more certain, than that this apocalyptic description of the harvest and the

<sup>2</sup> In Is. xvii. 5.

<sup>3</sup> As it may strike the reader, that a sickle is not a very proper instrument for a vintage; I observe, that the word in the original, *σπερμον* or *falx*, has a general meaning, and accordingly Cat<sup>o</sup> takes notice (*De Reb. Rust.*), that there were *falces* both for cutting hay and corn and vines.

<sup>4</sup> Vol. II. p. 114.

<sup>5</sup> P. 728.

<sup>6</sup> Judgm. on the R. Ch. p. 285.

vintage is borrowed from the prophet Joel<sup>7</sup>; and he afterwards says, ‘when I have, with more than usual diligence, compared this prophecy with that of Joel, in which both emblems refer to the same judgment, I have seen no reason for interpreting the emblems of St. John as belonging to separate judgments.’ As the emblem of a *harvest* did not ascertain, whether the enemies of God should be cut off by famine, or pestilence, or war; he remarks, that another and kindred similitude, that of a vintage, was ‘superadded, that it might more conspicuously be evident, that *war* would be the means employed. ‘This appears to be the simplest and most easy sense of the prophecy,’ I am again quoting the words of Vitringa; ‘although, if a distinction be made between these emblems, we must say, that God will provide means by his providence, that the enemies of the church should receive two most signal slaughters, between which some space of time would intervene, which agreeably to analogy may be represented by the interval, which separates a harvest from a vintage.’ The symbolic *grapes* are described as *fully ripe*. ‘That is,’ says Vitringa, ‘the period of the divine forbearance had expired, and villanies, no longer to be tolerated, had arisen to their utmost height. The measure of crimes was filled up.—Punishment therefore could no longer be deferred, but *the destroyers of the earth* were at length to be *destroyed*, and were in their turn to meet with their reward.’ Vitringa here, in imitation of the prophet, employs the past tense, though speaking of the future<sup>8</sup>. This, he ob-

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7 ‘The Holy Spirit in the more recent prophecies refers to the more ancient, and often employs the same words, diction, and figures; in order to lead us to the true sense of those oracles.’ Vitringa *de Canonibus Verbi prophetici recte exponendi*, cap. ii. can. xiv.

8 ‘It is,’ says Daubuz (*Preliminary Discourse*, p. 43) ‘the usual style of the prophets to write of things as already done and past, though they are only to happen afterwards. It is commonly said, that this is a sign of certainty, that the things shall as surely happen, as if they were already past. But I must beg leave to dissent; for I think, that this rather happens from the manner of the prophecy, wherein the knowledge of future events is exhibited in the vision seen by the prophet under symbolical per-



serves, is the period, when our Lord's prophetic parable of the burning of the tares shall be accomplished<sup>9</sup>.

In v. 20 the prophet adds, that *the wine-press was trodden without the city*, 'that is,' says Mr. Cradock, 'without the bounds of the true church, so that none of her members shall suffer by this judgment.' Without doubt, says Vitringa, Jerusalem, the image of the true church, is here designed<sup>10</sup>. But by some this clause has been thought to denote, that the catastrophe, alluded to by the prophet, shall take place somewhere out of the bounds of the Western Roman empire. *And blood came out of the wine-press, even unto the horse-bridles*, 'which,' bp. Newton remarks, 'is a strong hyperbolical way of speaking, to express vast slaughter and effusion of blood.'

Reference has been made to a passage of striking import in the iiiid. ch. of Joel; which chapter, says Mr. Lowth, 'relates to the latter times of the world.' 'Vast multitudes of the Antichristians,' says Dr. Wells, 'shall be destroyed' at the period of its accomplishment. It is thought to be prophetic of the very same events, which St. John has foretold shall take place in the course of the symbolic vintage and in the war of Armageddon. It begins with foretelling the mighty military preparations which shall be made, and the numerous forces which shall be assembled together by the friends of tyranny and antichristianism. *Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles: prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near:*

sons and actions, which represent those that happen afterwards. Thus the prophet has already seen the future events transacted in the symbols: and so the words in the time past are suitable to the case, the things having passed in his mind.' To the same purpose speaks Father Simon, when treating on those words relative to the witnesses, *the breath of life from God entered into them*. 'St. John speaks throughout his book in the style of a prophet; for which reason he frequently expresses future events by the past tense, they being present to him in his vision.' His Notes on the New Test.

9 Mat. xiii. 39—43. Brenius explains this passage in the same way, and more at large, in his treatise *De Regno Ecclesie Glorioso*.

10 P. 730.

let them come up. Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruning-hooks into spears: let the weak say, I am strong. Assemble yourselves, and come, all ye heathen, and gather yourselves together round about: thither cause thy Mighty Ones to come down, O Lord. Let the heathen be weakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat; for there will I sit to judge<sup>11</sup> all the heathen round about<sup>12</sup>. Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe: come get ye down, for the press is full, the fats overflow; for their wickedness is great. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision<sup>14</sup>: for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision<sup>15</sup>. This prophecy of Joel does, says Vitringa, refer to that time, when great commotions shall arise through all the countries of Europe, and the antichristian empire shall be destroyed<sup>16</sup>; and he observes, that the place styled Armageddon by St. John is the same with the Valley of Jehoshaphat<sup>17</sup>. 'The place of this remarkable action,' says Dr. Lowth, 'is here called *the Valley of Jehoshaphat*; as if the prophet had said, *the Place where the Lord will execute judgment*, for so the word *jehoshaphat* signifies in the original.

The learned and pious Dr. Owen, in alluding to the slaughter of the antichristian kings and their partisans, is not chargeable with disguising his sentiments, and with speaking in a tone of caution and reserve. 'Shew me,' says he, 'seven kings that ever yet labored sincerely to enhance the kingdom of the Lord Jesus, and I dare boldly

11 *To judge all the heathen*, i. e. says bishop Newcome, 'to punish by a signal overthrow.'

12 Here the prophet clearly makes a transition, and addresses those, who are to defeat the antichristian party and all the *Mighty Ones* who are enlisted under its banners.

13 *The repetition* of this noun signifies, says Dr. Pococke, according to a well attested rule of the Hebrew grammarians, that those spoken of will be extraordinarily numerous.

14 Bp. Newcome renders it, *the valley of excision*.

15 III. 9—14.

16 In Apoc. p. 293.

17 In Apoc. xvi. 16. See the same observation in Brenius (*De Regno Christi*); and in Dr. Cressener (*Judg. on the R. Ch. p. 285.*)

say, *Octavus quis fuerit non constat*. And is there not a cry for all this; *How long, Lord, Holy and True, dost thou not avenge our blood on them that live on the earth?* Rev. vi. 10.—Will not the Lord—call *the fowls of heaven to eat the flesh of kings, and captains, and great men of the earth?* Rev. xix. 18.—The time shall come, wherein the earth shall disclose her slain; and not the simplest heretic (as they were counted) shall have his blood unrevenge: neither shall any atonement be made for this blood, or expiation be allowed, whilst a toe of *the Image*, or a bone of *the Beast*, is left unbroken<sup>18</sup>.’

In reading the predictions, which I have recently cited, of future slaughter, humanity cannot but be wounded. But it is proper that the truth should be told. It is time, that those who believe in prophecy should learn, on what class of persons the full weight of the divine vengeance is fully to fall.

That it is no light matter to pay a servile obedience to the unholy commands of the civil magistrate and the hierarchies, and to assist them in their unrighteous designs, the following alarming declaration will serve to evince. In ch. xiv. of the Apocalypse, an angel is represented as *saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the Beast and his Image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation*<sup>19</sup>. He shall *drink of the wine of the wrath of God*; i. e. says Mr. Cradock, he ‘shall partake of severe judgments,

18 *Coll. of Ser.* ut supra, p. 329. This distinguished divine, a few pages farther (p 335), asks, in language adapted to the taste of the times, ‘Is it not evident to him that hath but half an eye, that the whole present constitution of government of the nations is so cemented with antichristian mortar, from the very top to the bottom, that, without a thorough shaking, they cannot be cleansed?’ In another sermon (ser. 37), he says, ‘God hath three great works to do, in the day of his carrying on the interest of Christ and the Gospel. 1. He hath great revenges to take. 2. He hath great deliverances to work. 3. He hath great discoveries to make.’

19 V. 9, 10.

the effect of God's wrath.' This passage, in the opinion of Daubuz<sup>20</sup>, refers to the accomplishment of the symbolic harvest and vintage, and to the infliction of those judgments, which are denominated the Seven Vials. 'The threatening,' says this learned commentator, 'being levelled against such as any way yield to the religion of the Beast, and submit to the taking only of the public mark of profession in the *forehead*, as well as giving actual assistance, which is the case of them that take it upon their *hands*, shews us, that God's plagues affect not only those that presumptuously act in the corruptions, but all those fearful persons, who did not actually resist, or avoid giving way to them.' In the next verse the prophet adds, that *the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever : and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the Beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.* 'The expression *for ever and ever* is,' says Daubuz, 'to be understood during the continuation of the subject ; that is, whilst the Beast and False Prophet have adherents, they shall have a perpetual torment.' These awful denunciations, in the opinion of Vitringa, have a double reference ; and respect alike the punishments of a future state and the judgments to be inflicted in the present world.

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## CHAPTER XVIII.

ON THE FATE OF THE TEN HORNS OF THE SECULAR BEAST.

FROM ch. xvi. of the Apocalypse a prophecy has been cited, which foretells the overthrow of a number of confederated princes. But there are prophecies yet more express. There are prophecies, which clearly announce that every antichristian government in Europe shall be destroyed. To the philanthropist such conclusions, if satisfactorily deduced from the prophetic scriptures, must be capable of imparting the purest pleasure.

If I am asked, why I take so much pains to explain the prophecies, which foretell the arbitrary conduct and the subsequent destruction of the antichristian princes of Europe, I reply, that I have the highest authority for doing it, the particular recommendation of the prophet himself. At the close of the description of the ten-horned Beast, which represents these kings, St. John adds, (xiii. 9, 10.), *If any man have an ear, let him hear. He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword, must be killed with the sword*<sup>1</sup>. Now the first of these sentences unquestionably signifies, that the reader of the Apocalypse should, to this part of it, pay a marked attention, and study it with the greatest care. Thus, as bishop Newton observes<sup>2</sup>, ‘it was customary with our Saviour, when he would have his auditors pay a particular attention to what he had been saying, to add, *He who hath ears to hear let him hear.*’ The subsequent sentence of the prophet Mr. Pyle thus paraphrases: ‘he will assuredly vindicate the cause of his true religion, and pull down the antichristian powers that oppress it, by a most exemplary

1 The two great evils produced by the ten-horned Beast, says an annotator on this verse, ‘will be *slavery and death.* And God will, in his due time, arise and avenge.’ Cradock.

2 In loc.

destruction; and cause his true and faithful servants to reap the blessings of Christianity in safety, glory, and peace.' Perhaps this verse does not merely denounce the destruction of the antichristian monarchies themselves, but may denote more particularly, with respect to individual princes, that the time will come, when he who enslaved his people shall himself be imprisoned; when he who maketh havoc with the sword shall himself be put to death.

I shall next quote from ch. xvii. an important passage, which foretells the overthrow of the antichristian monarchies, briefly indeed, but clearly. *And the angel said unto me—the Ten Horns which thou sawest are Ten Kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the Beast. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the Beast. These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them.* That this is not spoken of the conduct of the Ten Kings at any particular time, but of their conduct in general, is clear and indisputable. Can any man then, pretending to the slightest skill in the diction of prophecy, attentively inspect these verses (v. 12, 13, 14), and at the same time entertain a doubt (however ignorant he may be of what has actually passed in the world), whether the mass of European princes have not been eminently hostile to human happiness and to genuine Christianity<sup>3</sup>?

As the Roman Western empire was not broken into separate portions, and governed by a number of distinct and independent princes, till several centuries after the delivery of his prophecy, our inspired apostle accordingly apprises us, that, in his time, the epoch of their dominion was not arrived. They had, as he expresses himself, *received no kingdom* AS YET. After observing that we do not read in the book of Revelation of any other personage

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3 'The splendor, luxury, self-interest, martial glory, &c. which pass for essentials in Christian governments, are totally opposite to the meek, humble, self-denying spirit of Christianity; and whichever of these finally prevails over the other, the present form of the government must be dissolved.' Hartley on Man, 1749, 8vo. vol. II. p. 366.

denominated a beast, excepting the two-horned and the ten-horned Beasts; I shall cite the next clause of v. 12, which asserts, that *the Ten Kings receive power as kings one hour with the Beast*. The Beast pointed to in this passage the prophet speaks of as distinct from the Ten Kings; and he thereby has admonished us, that he has not here in view the greater of the two Beasts, but the smaller, who has two horns and is the representative of the antichristian priesthood. ‘What we translate *one hour*, *μικρὴν ὥραν*, ought,’ says Lowman, ‘to have been translated *the same hour* or point of time, as several learned interpreters have justly observed<sup>4</sup>.—The Beast then, and the Ten Kings or Kingdoms, are to be contemporary powers, or to reign at the same time.’ *These have one mind*, i. e. says Lowman, ‘they have the same design and intention<sup>5</sup>.’ Will it not to be suspected by some, that the full exposition of this prophetic clause is this, that, whilst their joint reign subsists, I mean that of the antichristian kings and their allies in the priesthood, too many among them will have the same common design of pillaging the property, and of usurping the rights, of mankind? Besides, in another view, how true an idea do these verses suggest of the despots of Europe! They speak a similar language to some before quoted from ch. xiii. Consult the pages of modern history; and examine, if they have not uniformly *given their power and strength unto the Beast*, that has *two horns like a lamb*? Have they not, to the authors of spiritual despotism, constantly imparted aid? Are not these the persons who have most successfully *made war with the lamb*? Has not an unlawful power been assumed by them over the religion of Jesus? When they have not dared themselves to model and to alter it, have they not authorised the claim in a foreign priest or a domestic synod? Are not the annals of every country, and of almost every period, stained by the blood of the disciples of *the Lamb*, which they have shed; and have they not levelled their bitterest

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<sup>4</sup> As for instance Vitringa and bp. Newton.

<sup>5</sup> Pref. p. 17.

opposition against those, who have been most distinguished for purity of faith, of practice, and of external worship?

The sentence pronounced against the several antichristian monarchies of Europe in v. 8, and 11, of this chapter, I must not altogether omit. In the former place, it is affirmed, that *the Beast having Ten Horns*, which at the time of the prophecy had no being, shall arise, and afterwards *shall go into perdition*, or, as it might have been translated *shall go into destruction*. In the latter, it is again said of him, that he *goeth into perdition*.

‘These Ten Horns,’ says an early commentator, ‘are Ten European Kings, and whoever reckons them up, I find, brings in the Kings of Britain, for one of the horns of this terrible and fearful monster<sup>6</sup>.’ But this is a subject, on which I shall, for certain reasons which it is not difficult to comprehend, decline entering: and I shall only observe, that though *every other European monarchy* should stand justly chargeable with notorious antichristianism, it does not of necessity follow, that that of Great Britain carries upon it the same fatal marks; nor, though *every other writer* on the subject should maintain, that the English monarchy is unquestionably and of course one of the Ten Horns, is it an inevitable inference, that the evidence should strike me with equal force, or that I should entertain the opinion at all? It is, however, apprehended, that on this point the mind of the intelligent and unprejudiced reader will not long hesitate to decide.

As the events, foretold by St. John in ch. xvii. are of great importance, and terminate in a manner favorable to the bests interests of mankind, he resumes the subject in ch. xix. *And I saw the Beast, and the Kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, (i. e. against Christ) and against his army. And the Beast was taken, and with him the False*

<sup>6</sup> Haughton on Antichrist, p. 88.

<sup>7</sup> ‘The Beast and the False Prophet,’ i. e. says bp. Newton (in loc.), ‘the Antichristian Powers, Civil and Ecclesiastical.’



*Prophet*<sup>8</sup>, that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the Beast, and them that had worshipped his image: these were both cast alive into a lake of fire. This passage alike respects the oppressive governments and oppressive hierarchies of the European world. The final overthrow of the antichristian church, says a learned commentator on prophecy, ‘ will be accomplished in the subversion of those civil powers, which have been its only and its long support<sup>9</sup>.’ ‘ It is nothing,’ says a celebrated writer, ‘ but the *alliance* of the kingdom of Christ with the kingdoms of this world (an alliance which our Lord himself expressly disclaimed), that supports the grossest corruptions of Christianity; and perhaps we must wait for the fall of the civil powers before this most unnatural alliance be broken. Calamitous, no doubt, will that time be. But what convulsion in the political world ought to be a subject of lamentation, if it be attended with so desirable an event? May the *kingdom of God*, and of Christ (that which I conceive to be intended in the Lord’s prayer) truly and fully *come*, though all the kingdoms of the world be removed in order to make way for it<sup>10</sup>.’

*Fire* is a symbol of destruction; and accordingly the *casting of the Beast and the False Prophet into a lake of fire*, denotes, to use the words of an early apocalyptical writer upon this passage, ‘ the perpetual ruin of all antichristian tyranny, and an utter end of all wicked dominion<sup>11</sup>.’ In the 14th v. of the xxth chapter, immediately after the description of the general resurrection and the day of judgment, the same<sup>12</sup> language is employed. It is

8 Mr. Wakefield translates it, *the False Teacher*.

9 *Commentaries and Essays*; printed for Johnson. Signature Synergus, p. 485.

10 Priestley’s *Hist. of the Corruptions of Christianity*, vol. II. p. 489.

11 *The Irenicon Abridged*, by W. Sherwin, 1674, p. 37.

12 In the original the two passages vary not at all. In both it is *την λιμνην τοῦ πυρός*, which our translation arbitrarily renders, in one place, a lake of fire, in the other *the lake of fire*.

said of *Death*, that he was *cast into a lake of fire*. Here also the expression has a figurative acceptation: here also it denotes, not torment, but destruction<sup>13</sup>: here also it is applied, not to a real, but an ideal personage. The ten-horned Beast and the False Prophet *were both cast alive into a lake of fire*. ‘This,’ says Dr. Lancaster in his abridgement of Daubuz, ‘not only signifies, that the punishment of the Beast and of the False Prophet will be exceeding dreadful, but also that it will, and at the same time the consequences of it, be more terrible than that of their adherents. For we must consider, that—the Beast and False Prophet are bodies politic and perpetual or successive; and that the design here it to shew us, that Christ will not only destroy at last the persons, who at that time are in possession of what is signified by the Beast and False Prophet, but also utterly extirpate the succession of the tyranny and false prophecy for ever. So that the Beast and the False Prophet are persons in a double capacity; that is, persons in general, enemies to Christ, and also in possession of a power, which is to be extinguished with them. And therefore their particular judgment must be considered with that double view.’ Of these two emblematic personages the prophet asserts, not only that they were thrown into *a lake of fire*, but that they were thrown *alive*. Now, says Daubuz, ‘*alive* signifies one having power and activity;’ and therefore ‘when they are said to be *cast alive*,’ this may be designed ‘to shew, that this sudden Revolution shall happen to them whilst they are vigorous and active, strengthening themselves to resist<sup>14</sup>, and little

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13 ‘This *lake of fire* is but a symbolical notion, or representation of the perpetual continuation and unchangeableness of that state, into which those matters are reduced, which are said to be thrown therein; implying, that they shall no more affect mankind, as being to them utterly destroyed.’ Daubuz.

14 Perfectly does this correspond with the account of the war of Armageddon, in which the confederated antichristian princes are to levy mighty forces, and vigorously to exert themselves, immediately previous to their complete overthrow.

expecting to be suddenly overcome, and that all the power of this tyranny and false prophecy shall be so destroyed, that it shall never be able to act again. That is, not only that the persons of them that hold the power shall be destroyed, which is but a transient punishment; but also, that their succession shall be stopped, and the like power shall never be revived.'

But enough has been said to shew, that a momentous conclusion is to be drawn from the words of St. John. A conclusion highly consolatory and encouraging. Since we have not only seen, that the duration of the sovereignty of *the Ten Kings* is limited, it being declared, that *they receive power as Kings one hour with the Beast* (xvii. 12)<sup>15</sup>; but have seen it farther announced by the voice of the prophet, that *the Lamb shall overcome the Ten Kings* (xvii. 14), that *the Beast having Ten Horns shall go into perdition* (xvii. 8, 11), and again, that *this Beast was taken and cast into a lake of fire* (xix. 20), i. e. totally destroyed; we are, on the authority of prophecy, delivered clearly and repeatedly, authorised to conclude, that all the Monarchies of Europe which are antichristian will at length be destroyed. And were scripture altogether silent, we might gather from the light of reason, that all governments, founded on despotism and oppression, MUST be offensive to the Deity. 'From the known perfections of God, we conclude he wills the happiness of mankind; and though he condescends not to interpose miraculously, that that kind of civil polity is most pleasing in his eye<sup>16</sup>, which is productive of the greatest felicity<sup>17</sup>.'

15 It is also said, in ch. xiii. 5, of *the Beast having Ten Horns*, that *power was given unto him to continue forty and two months*.

16 We read but of one government appointed by the Deity; and it was not an HEREDITARY and MONARCHICAL GOVERNMENT, like those of the surrounding nations, but a FREE and POPULAR one. I now cite from a respectable anonymous writer. 'The government which God ordained over the children of Israel consisted of three parts, besides the magistrates of the several tribes and cities. They had a chief magistrate, who was called judge or captain, as Joshua, Gideon, and others; a council of 70 chosen men; and THE GENERAL ASSEMBLIES OF THE PEOPLE: and

The great Mr. Mede lays it down as a matter undeniably established, that the two-horned and the ten-horned Beasts expire together<sup>18</sup>. The former being regarded as the representative of the antichristian priesthood, reason herself indeed assures us it is highly probable, that though some particular horns of the Secular Beast, with their attendant hierarchies, will be earliest demolished; yet that the fall of the other civil and ecclesiastical tyrannies, linked as they are by so close a union to each other, will be events nearly contemporary. That they will be *absolutely* contemporary, the 9th and 10th verses of ch. xviii. seem to contradict; since they certainly countenance the idea, that the antichristian princes of Europe, some time previous to their own complete overthrow, will witness, within the limits of the Western Roman empire, the total downfall of priestly usurpation. ‘We are now to expect soon,’ says Bengelius in the conclusion of his Exposition of the Apocalypse, ‘the harvest, and the vintage; the pouring out of the vials; the judgment of Babylon; the final rage of the Beast, and his destruction.’ And he shortly after adds, ‘the Mighty and the Nobles of this world are astonished, when they are told there will soon be a Great Change<sup>19</sup>.’ This celebrated German, it will per-

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these judges or captains had not the name or power of kings, neither was their power transmitted to their children.’ Remarkable is the declaration of Hosea, which he makes in the name of the Supreme Being (xiii. 11), *I gave thee a king in mine anger.*

17 Hall’s Apol. for the freedom of the Press. Pref.

18 *Clav. Apoc.* Pars Prima, Synchronismus II. p. 523. ‘As these two Beasts,’ says Mr. Whiston, ‘are such great companions while they live together, so it is certain, that their final period is at one and the same time, and that they perish with the same common destruction,’ p. 69. The next are the words of a more modern, a more orthodox, but I will not say, an honest writer. ‘These two Beasts,’ says bp. Hallifax, ‘being inseparable one from the other, in their rise and in their extinction, must of course be considered as contemporaries,’ p. 245. I just add, that that part of the Apocalypse (ch. xvii), where *the whore of Babylon* is described as *sitting upon the ten-horned Beast*, evidently implies, that the tyrannising antichristian priesthood and the Ten Kings should co-exist.

19 Int. to the Apoc. ut supra, p. 326.



haps be thought, was somewhat premature, when he stated this astonishment to have taken place at the time *he* wrote<sup>20</sup>. But as applied to the present æra his statement seems perfectly correct. The materials of a Great Change in the European world are already collected; and rapid is their increase. At length the period *is* arrived, when all the plunderers of mankind, however discriminated by titles or offices, feel alternate emotions of astonishment and terror; and are seriously apprehensive of being buried under the foundation of a Mighty Revolution.

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## CHAPTER XIX.

### ON PROPHECY IN GENERAL, AND THE HEBREW PROPHETS IN PARTICULAR.

HITHERTO I have been *principally* employed in citing extracts, or suggesting thoughts, illustrative of the apocalyptic predictions. But as a considerable number of those, which occur in the chapters immediately succeeding, and in the subsequent part of the work, are taken either from Daniel, or from Isaiah, or from some other prophetic writer of the Jewish dispensation, I have concluded, that some extracts, relative to the Hebrew prophets, and to prophecy in general, may be properly introduced, and that this part of the work furnishes a convenient place for their insertion. Had so large an assemblage of *general observations* been introduced in the beginning of the work, and *added* to those, relative to the Apocalypse, which are brought forward in the *iiid* and *ivth* chapters, I should have been apprehensive, lest a considerable proportion of my readers, being principally solicitous to penetrate the import of *particular prophecies*, would have neglected to bestow upon them that degree of attention which they justly claim.

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20 His Exposition was published in 1740.

‘To know future events,’ says Dr. Sykes, ‘and to be able to foretell them, is not, cannot be the effect of study, or peculiar temperature of body: it cannot be taught in schools, since it depends upon an infinity of free contingent actions, which he alone who governs all things can direct or foresee. If, therefore, events have been foreseen and foretold, at such distance of time, as excludes the knowledge of human minds, and the powers of their conjectures, it must be owing to divine influence, and to that alone.’

There are, it may be observed, several propositions, to prove any one of which, would be to prove the non-existence of prophecy. But then these propositions are so unreasonable, so unfounded, that to give a simple statement of them will be sufficient to convince the honest inquirer, that they are completely incapable of proof. If Collins, in his work against prophecy, ‘would have acted the part of a fair and reasonable adversary, he should,’ says Dr. Samuel Chandler, ‘have proved prophecy an impossible thing; either that there is no God; or that if there is, he doth not concern himself about the affairs of nations and kingdoms; or that if he doth, he knows nothing before it comes to pass; or that he hath no wise purposes to answer by over-ruling the affairs of the world, and executing the purposes of his own good pleasure; or that if he hath, he cannot discover these purposes to men; or that if he could, there is no wise and kind purpose to be answered by such a revelation; or that if there is, those to whom he vouchsafes a revelation cannot discover it to others’.

Reserving all the other general observations on prophecy to a subsequent part of the chapter, I shall here introduce those extracts, which respect the authenticity of the Hebrew scriptures.

By ‘the subsistence of the Jewish people at this time,’ says Dr. Lardner, ‘all are assured of the antiquity and

1 Principles and Connexion of Nat. and Rev. Rel. p. 176

2 Vindic. of Dan. 1728, p. 30.

genuineness of the scriptures of the Old Testament. These are received by them, and read in their synagogues: and they allow, that therein are contained promises of a great and eminent deliverer. None therefore can pretend, that the scriptures, so often appealed to by Christ and his apostles, are forgeries of Christians<sup>3</sup>.

‘There can,’ says Dr. Priestly, ‘be no doubt but that the canon of the Old Testament was the same in the time of our Saviour as it is now<sup>4</sup>; nor could it have been corrupted materially after the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity<sup>5</sup>, on account of the sect of the Samaritans, which took its rise about that time. For these people professed the same regard to the sacred books with the Jews themselves, and were always at variance with them about the interpretation of the scriptures. The Samaritan copy of the Pentateuch is now in our hands, and excepting some *numbers*, in which the different copies and translations of all ancient writings are peculiarly subject to vary, and a single text, in which mount Gerizim and mount Ebal are interchanged, it is the very same with the Jewish copy. Not long after this, the books of the Old Testament, beginning with the Pentateuch, were translated into Greek, and dispersed, by means of the Jews, into almost every part of the known world. There is not the least probability, that any change, worth any man’s attempting to make, or in the least affecting any principal point of the Jewish religion, was made during their

<sup>3</sup> Lardner’s Works, vol. X. p. 84.

<sup>4</sup> ‘The Jewish synagogues in all countries were,’ says Mr. Gray, ‘numerous: wherever the apostles preached, they found them; they were established by the direction of the rabbins in every place, where there were ten persons of full age and free condition.’ Accordingly the jealous care, with which the scriptures were preserved in the tabernacle, and in the temple, was, ‘not more calculated to secure their integrity, than that reverence which afterwards displayed itself in the dispersed synagogues, and in the churches consecrated to the Christian faith.’ A Key to the Old Testament by the Rev. Robert Gray, late of St. Mary Hall, Oxf. 1791, p. 13, 16.

<sup>5</sup> The Jews, according to Prideaux, returned from their captivity at Babylon in the year 535 before the Christian æra.

captivity; which, however, was not so long, reckoning from the time of the destruction of the city by Nebuchadnezzar, but that many of those who returned from it had a perfect remembrance of the temple of Solomon, which had been burned in the siege of Nebuchadnezzar; for they wept when they saw how much the new temple was inferior to it, and can it be supposed, but that some of these people would have taken the alarm, and a schism have been occasioned, if any material change had been attempted to be made in the constitution of the law, or the contents of the sacred books.—If we go farther back into the Jewish history, we shall be unable to pitch upon any time, in which any material change in the sacred books could have been attempted, with the least prospect of success. It was one of the most earnest instructions of Moses himself, that the book of the law, a copy of which was lodged in the ark, should be the subject of constant reading and meditation in every Israelitish family; and it was expressly appointed, that it should be read publicly every seven years, at the feast of Tabernacles, Deut. xxxi. 9, 13; and the Levites, who were dispersed through all the twelve tribes, were particularly appointed to study and to explain it to the rest of the nation; and notwithstanding the times of defection and idolatry, they were never entirely without prophets, and even many thousands of others, who continued firm in the worship of the true God, and therefore must have retained their regard to the sacred books of the law.—Upon the whole, the Jews have, no doubt, acted the part of most faithful and even scrupulous guardians of their sacred books, for the use of all the world in the times of Christianity. After the last of the prophets, Malachi, they admitted no more books into their canon, so as to permit them to be read in their synagogues, though they were written by the most eminent men in their nation; it being a maxim with them, that no book could be entitled to a place in the canon of their scriptures, unless it was written by a prophet, or a person who had had communication with God. That the scriptures of the



Old Testament have not been materially corrupted by the Jews since the promulgation of Christianity,—is evident from the many prophecies still remaining in their scriptures, concerning the humiliation and sufferings of the Messiah, in which the Christians always triumphed when they disputed with the Jews. These passages, therefore, we may assure ourselves, would have been the first that the Jews would have practised upon, if it had been in their power, or in their inclination to do it<sup>6</sup>.

‘When corruptions in worship and manners, and many superstitious usages, grew among them, they were,’ says Dr. Worthington, ‘obliged to devise an oral law, to be handed down by oral tradition, to countenance those corruptions and innovations; which law they afterwards collected into a body, and committed to writing likewise. But the *Mishna* had been needless and superfluous, durst they have incorporated their traditions with the scriptures. As they have not done this, in a case in which they were most tempted to do it, there is less room to suspect their having wilfully corrupted them in other respects.’ So scrupulously vigilant were the Jews in preserving ‘the scriptures, that their Masorites numbered not only the sections but even the words and letters, that no fraud or inadvertency might corrupt—the least iota of what they esteemed so sacred. If a word happened to be altered in any copy, it was to be laid aside as useless, or given to a poor man to teach his children by, on condition it was not brought into the synagogue. The prince was to copy the original exemplar of the law, laid up in the sanctuary, with his own hand: and every Jew was to make it his constant discourse and meditation, to teach it to his children, and wear part of it on his hands and forehead<sup>7</sup>.’

‘We shall,’ says Mr. Gray, ‘be still farther convinced, that the sacred volume has preserved its genuine purity in every important point, if we consider how little the Septua-

6 Institutes of Nat. and Rev. Rel. 1782, vol. I. p. 297.

7 Vol. I. p. 136, 140.

gint version of the scriptures differs from the Hebrew copies, notwithstanding the many ages that have elapsed since the time of Ptolemy Philadelphus, the king of Egypt, who was the second monarch of the Macedonian race, about 270 years before Christ, and under whose reign this translation was made into Greek. It has been maintained, indeed, by some learned men, that only the Pentateuch was translated at first, and that the other books were rendered into Greek successively at different times; however this may have been, they were all translated long before the birth of Christ. This version has no important variations from the Hebrew, except in some chronological accounts, occasioned probably by the carelessness of the copyists. It was used in all those countries, where Alexander had established the Grecian language, and seems to have been admitted into the Jewish synagogues in Judæa, and even at Jerusalem, where that language prevailed; and the Septuagint was certainly most used there in the time of our Saviour.—Thus does the general coincidence between the Hebrew copies<sup>8</sup>, the Samaritan Pentateuch, and the Septuagint version of the Old Testament, demonstrate the unaltered integrity of the scriptures in important points, as we now possess them, and this integrity is still farther confirmed by the conformity which subsists between those various translations of the Bible into different languages, which have been performed since the time of our Saviour.—It appears, therefore, that, from the time of their first inspiration to the present day, the sacred writings have been dispersed into so many different hands, that no possible opportunity could be furnished for confederate corruption, and every designed alteration must immediately have been detected<sup>9</sup>.

8 In the bible of Kennicott are the most considerable variations of nearly 700 different Hebrew manuscripts; and many more have been collated by the more recent labors of De Rossi.

9 Key to the Old Test. p. 20, 22. After observing that the Septuagint may have been translated from *very ancient* Hebrew manuscripts, bp. Newcome adds, ‘this observation may be extended to the Chaldee paraphrase of Jonathan, made about the time of Christ; to the Syriac version, which

‘All the books of scripture have also,’ observes Dr. Priestley, ‘many *internal marks* of their being the genuine production of the ages, in which they are said to have been written, as they contain so many allusions to particular persons, places, opinions, and customs, which are known, from other allowed histories, to have existed in those times<sup>10</sup>.’ In agreement with this remark of Dr. Priestley, Dr. Hartley asserts, that ‘history and chronology were in so uncertain a state in ancient times, that the prophecies concerning foreign countries *could not* have been adapted to the facts, *even after they had happened*, with so much exactness as modern enquirers have shewn the scripture-prophecies to be, *by a learned nation*, and much less by the Jews, who were remarkably ignorant of what passed in foreign countries<sup>11</sup>.’

The pretensions of the Hebrew prophets ‘to be considered as God’s appointed servants, were,’ says Mr. Gray, ‘demonstrated by the unimpeachable integrity of their characters; by the intrinsic excellence and tendency of their instruction; and by the disinterested zeal, and undaunted fortitude, with which they persevered in their great designs. These were still farther confirmed by the miraculous proof which they displayed of divine support, and by the immediate completion of many less important predictions which they uttered. Such were the credentials of their exalted character, which the prophets furnished to their contemporaries; and we, who having lived to witness the appearance of the second dispensation, can look back to the connection which subsisted between the two covenants, have received additional evidence of the inspiration of the prophets, in the attestations of our Saviour and his apostles; and in the retrospect of a germinant and gradually maturing scheme of

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is generally attributed to the first century; to the imperfect Greek versions of Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion, who lived in the second century; and even to the Latin version, of which Jerom was the author in the fourth century.’ *Attempt towards an Improved Version of Ezekiel*. Dublin, 1788. Pref. p. 36.

10 Institutes, vol. I. p. 303.

11 On Man, vol. II. p. 152.

prophecy, connected in all its parts.—We have still farther incontrovertible proofs of their divine appointment, in the numerous prophecies, which, in these latter days, are fulfilled, and still under our own eyes continue to receive their completion<sup>12</sup>.’

The next quotation is from that ingenious and truly liberal prelate, Dr. Newcome, bp. of Waterford. ‘ God raised up a succession of prophets among his people for many wise and gracious purposes. They were not only designed to retain the Jews in the worship of the one true God ; but to spread the knowlege of him among the neighboring nations, by the fame of their predictions and miracles. They were a barrier against those prevailing kinds of superstition which consisted in the supposed evocation of departed spirits, and in consulting imaginary local deities, for the purpose of gratifying the natural thirst which all mankind have for the knowlege of futurity. It must also be observed, that the attestations given by the prophets to the Mosaic law, their instructions and exortations, their reproofs and threatenings, were powerful means of preserving the Jews in obedience, and eminent displays of the divine goodness and compassion. Another design in sending the prophets was, that—they might record God’s dealings with his people and with other adjoining nations and empires ; and might thus transmit to after ages a most instructive history of his adorable ways in governing the world. Josephus asserts<sup>13</sup>, that, from the death of Moses to the reign of Artaxerxes, the prophets who succeeded that legislator wrote the transactions of their own times.—This assertion is confirmed by the sacred writers ; who mention the name of many prophets as having recorded the affairs of the Jewish nation. A farther and most important reason for instituting the prophetic order was, that, by a long series of predictions, the attention of the Jews might be turned to the coming of their Messiah ; and that the

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12 Key to the Old Test. p. 213.

13 Contr. Ap. I. 8.



faith of succeeding ages in that great event might be thus confirmed. The writings of these prophets bear plain signatures of their divine authority. Examine the books of the Greek and Roman sages ; and observe what discordant opinions *they* contain on almost every point of theology and philosophy. But in the Hebrew prophets there is a wonderful harmony of doctrine for above a thousand years<sup>14</sup> ; unparalleled in the writings of any country. History teaches us, that a great number of their prophecies has been accomplished ; and we know that some of them are accomplishing at this day. It also peculiarly deserves our notice, that these holy men entertained the most worthy conceptions of the Deity in the midst of an idolatrous nation ; and inculcated the supreme excellence of moral duties, when all around them, even the few worshippers of Jehovah himself, were solely intent on ritual observances. The writings, which these men of God have transmitted down to us, will be eminently useful in every age of the Christian church ; not only as they contain illustrious prophecies of many events and especially of our Blessed Lord's appearance, but for their magnificent descriptions of the Deity, for their animating lessons of piety and virtue, and for the indignation which they express and the punishments which they denounce against idolatry and vice : which particular topics, among many other instructive and important ones, are treated by them with uncommon variety, beauty and sublimity, and with an authority becoming ambassadors of The Most High<sup>15</sup>.

In enumerating the uses of prophecy in ancient times, Dr. Jortin says,

' 1. It served to secure the belief of a God and of a providence. As God is invisible and spiritual, there was cause to fear, that in the first and ruder ages of the world,

14 'From Moses before Christ about 1500, to Malachi before Christ about 436.'

15 An Attempt towards an Improved Version of the Twelve Minor Prophets, 1785, pref. p. 5.

when men were busier in cultivating the earth than in cultivating arts and sciences, and in seeking the necessities of life, than in the study of morality, they might forget their creator and governor; and therefore God maintained amongst them the great article of faith in him, by manifestations of himself; by sending angels to declare his will; by miracles; and by prophecies. These were barriers against atheism.'

'2. It was intended to give men the profoundest veneration for that amazing knowledge from which nothing was concealed, not even the future actions of creatures, and the things which as yet were not. How could a man hope to hide any counsel, any design, or thought from such a being?'

'3. It contributed to keep up devotion and true religion, the religion of the heart, which consists partly in entertaining just and honorable notions of God and of his perfections, and which is a more rational and a more acceptable service than rites and ceremonies.'

'4. It excited men to rely upon God, and to love him, who condescended to hold this mutual intercourse with his creatures'<sup>16</sup>.

With respect to the Hebrew prophets, 'whose inspired writings still continue to instruct mankind, it may,' says Mr. Gray, 'be affirmed, that in the long and illustrious succession from Moses to Malachi, *not one* appears, who was not entitled to considerable reverence by the display of great and extraordinary virtues. Employed in the exalted office of teaching and reforming mankind, they appear to have been animated with a becoming and correspondent zeal.—The most intemperate princes were sometimes compelled unwillingly to hear and to obey their directions, though often so incensed by their rebuke, as to resent it by the severest persecutions. Then it was, that the prophets evinced the integrity of their characters, by zealously encountering oppression, hatred, and death, in

the cause of religion. Then it was, that they firmly supported *trial of cruel mockings and scourgings; yea, moreover, of bonds and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about, destitute, afflicted, tormented.*<sup>17.</sup>

To the same purpose speaks Mr. Lowth. ‘ With what undaunted courage and constancy did they reprove the popular vices of the times they lived in? Not sparing the greatest persons either out of fear or flattery. And if we suppose them to have acted like men in their wits (and there is no tolerable reason to suspect the contrary), we must conclude, that nothing but a sense of their duty could prompt them to do this; for they could propose no advantage to themselves by it, but on the contrary were to expect all the scorn and misery, which the angry and revengeful temper of wicked men in power, whom they had offended, could bring upon them. And it could certainly be no pleasure to be continually reprovng men, when there was little or no hopes of reclaiming them: nay, when they had not so much civility as to thank them for their good intentions, and take the good advice, which they offered, kindly at their hands. If it had not been purely out of a principle of conscience, and that they were persuaded of the truth and great concern of these things, and therefore spoke, they might, with much more advantage to themselves, have let men be quiet and go on securely in their sins. Many of their troubles and sufferings we find recorded in their own books, but several other scripture-writers assure us, that they were generally martyrs for the truth’s sake, and yet none of these sufferings could prevail with them to retract any thing they had said, or to confess that they had been deluded themselves, or imposed upon others, and said, *the Lord saith*, though he had not spoken.’

We find, says the same writer, that they set forth the absurdity of Pagan idolatry with great strength ‘ of argu-

17 Heb. xi. 36, 37. Key to the Old Test. p. 328.

ment : and endeavor to give men clear and distinct notions of God's spirituality, unity, omnipresence, universal providence,—and justice in rewarding men according to their works. They unfold the methods of providence in disposing of kingdoms, and making use of wicked princes and nations to be the instruments of God's justice in punishing the sins of others. Such discourses do not look like the idle dreams of a melancholy and disturbed fancy, but do indeed answer the character they pretend to<sup>18</sup>.

‘ Whilst other nations,’ says Dr. Priestley, ‘ were addicted to the most wretched superstitions, having recourse to various divinations, and arts of witchcraft, whenever they wanted to get intelligence concerning future events, or the assistance of superior powers, the Jewish people were taught to hold all these things in deserved contempt and abhorrence. They were instructed to expect no information concerning future events, or assistance in any undertaking, but from the one living and true God ; and they were commanded to punish all those who pretended to the abominable arts of divination and witchcraft with death. It is observed, also, that the Jewish prophets delivered themselves with gravity and seriousness, worthy of the majesty of him that sent them, and did not use those violent convulsions, foamings at the mouth, and extravagant gestures, which the heathen diviners had recourse to, in order to dazzle and impose upon those who consulted them. So far is there from being any pretence for saying, that the Jews were naturally more intelligent than their neighbors, and attained those just notions of religion and morality by their own reason and good sense, that their own history always represents them as stiff-necked, and slow of understanding ; and to this very day their enemies constantly reproach them as being the most stupid of mankind. Besides, their history shews, that the Jews were naturally as prone to idolatry and superstition as any other people

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<sup>18</sup> Lowth's *Vindication of the Divine Authority and Inspiration of the Old and New Testament*, 1692, p. 118, 121.



could be ; and their frequent relapses into the idolatry of their neighbors—demonstrate, that, had it not been for divine instructions, inculcated again and again, they would have been far from shewing an example of a purer religion, or more rational worship, than such as prevailed in other countries<sup>19</sup>.’

‘ The characters of the eminent persons mentioned in the scriptures arise,’ says Dr. Hartley, ‘ so much, in an indirect way, from the plain narration of facts,’ and ‘ their sins and imperfections are so fully set forth by themselves, or their friends, with their condemnation and punishment,—that we have in this a remarkable additional evidence for the truth of this part of scripture-history.’ At the same time the character of the prophets in general was uncommonly excellent. Far too excellent, indeed, ‘ to allow the supposition of an impious fraud and imposture ; which must be the case, if they had not divine authority<sup>20</sup>.’

If the prophetic writings of the Jews were the fabrications of fanaticism or imposture, ‘ what imaginable reason is there,’ asks a divine of the last century, ‘ why the oracles of all the Heathen nations should never’ have been much regarded, and now, in a manner, be ‘ utterly lost, and that the books of the Jews should still be preserved in their full authority ; but the power and advantage of truth in these, and the want of it in them<sup>21</sup>?’

The great *variety* observable in the style of the books of the Old Testament ‘ makes it improbable,’ says Dr. Doddridge, ‘ they should have been the work of *one*, and the *unity of design*, that they should have been the invention of *many* : for if these supposed inventors lived in different ages, they could not have consulted with each other ; and if they lived in the same age, the largeness of their plan would only have subjected them to new difficulties,

19 Institutes, vol. I. p. 366.

20 On Man, vol. II. p. 170.

21 Jenkin’s Reasonableness and Certainty of the Chr. Rel. 1698, vol. I. p. 253.

without being likely to answer any valuable end<sup>22</sup>.' To the same purpose speaks bp. Hurd. In all the Hebrew prophets a unity of design is conspicuous ; ' yet without the least appearance of *collusion*, since *each* prophet hath his own peculiar views, and enlarges on facts and circumstances unnoticed by any other. Farther still, these various and successive prophecies are so intimately blended, and, as we may say, incorporated with each other, that the credit of *all* depends on the truth of *each*. For, the accomplishment of them falling in different times, every preceding prophecy becomes surety, as it were, for those that follow ; and the failure of any one must bring disgrace and ruin on all the rest<sup>23</sup>.'

The greater part of the Hebrew prophets are written in poetry<sup>24</sup>. Now the graceful dignity of the Hebrew poetry cannot, observes a great proficient in biblical learning, ' be always perceived in a verbal translation ; which not uncommonly disguises the original, as much as a prosaic rendering would cast a veil over the beauty of Homer or Sophocles. However,' says this writer, ' various kinds of beauty will ever shine by their native splendor throughout the Hebrew scriptures<sup>25</sup>.'

Amongst other considerations, which may be adverted to as accounting for the obscurity to be found in the Hebrew scriptures, it may be remarked, that they are the productions of persons, who lived in A PERIOD OF TIME, and in A COUNTRY OF THE GLOBE, far remote from our own. Accordingly, says bp. Chandler, the Hebrew, as other Eastern languages, is entirely different from the European. Many things are there left to be supplied by the quickness of the reader's apprehension, which are with us expressed by proper words and repetitions. Particles dis-

22 Doddridge's Lect. 4to. 1763, p. 280.

23 Vol. I. p. 136.

24 On this point see lectures 18, 19, and 20 of the *Praelectiones* of bp. Lowth.

25 Newcome's Ezekiel, pref. p. 38.

junctive and adversative, significative marks of connexion, and of transition from one subject to another, are often omitted here. Dialogues are carried on, objections answered, comparisons made, without notice in the discourse<sup>26</sup>.

Besides, the remains of the Hebrew language are, bp. Newcome observes, 'comprehended in one volume; ample indeed, and greatly diversified as to its matter and style, but of very inconsiderable bulk, when compared with the Greek and Roman writings, which have escaped the wreck of time. Hence,' says the learned prelate, 'it follows, that we are not acquainted with its full extent. If the book of Jasher and of Lamentations, all the odes of Solomon, and all his writings on natural history, were now extant; if the larger annals of the kings of Judah and Israel, and the histories ascribed to several prophets, had also been transmitted to us, the Hebrew tongue would have been enriched with many additional words and phrases, and many dark passages in the books which are preserved would have been placed in the clearest light.'

But notwithstanding the existence of such passages be admitted, yet, says this able critic, 'there are very few words or phrases in the Hebrew scriptures, of which a probable explanation cannot be given, either from the nature of the thing, or the context, or a comparison of the doubtful place with parallel ones, or the aid of the sister languages, or the interpretation of the ancient translators.—The books of Moses contain an authentic system of the religious and political laws under which the Hebrews lived. The miscellaneous contents of their sacred writings largely explain their customs and opinions. Their own writers, since the volume of their sacred writings was completed, supply no small assistance on these subjects: and the accounts which historians and travellers give of the East, where manners continue unaltered through a course of ages, are a farther source of most useful information.—

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26 Def. of Chr. from the Proph. Intr. p. 11.

We also derive important assistance from the Masoretic punctuation; from the grammars, lexicons, concordances, and commentaries of the later Jews, and from the more complete, learned, and judicious ones of modern times;—and from that grand and highly useful undertaking, the collation of Hebrew and Samaritan manuscripts. The difficulties in the Hebrew scriptures will be diminished in proportion as our external helps are multiplied; and as these inestimable books are carefully studied by men, who add to sagacity and judgment a large share of human learning, and that insight into the nature of language, which arises from logical and critical inquiries, and from an acquaintance with the structure of the learned tongues and of the kindred oriental dialects<sup>27</sup>.

I shall, says the great Dr. Clarke, in his *Evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion*, point ‘at some particular extraordinary prophecies, which deserve to be carefully considered and compared with the events, whether they could possibly have proceeded from chance or from enthusiasm.’ Among those to which he has appealed, I shall cite only a part of what he says respecting the fate of those opulent cities of antiquity, Babylon and Tyre. ‘Concerning Babylon it was particularly foretold, that it should be<sup>28</sup> shut up and besieged by, the Medes, Elamites, and Armenians: that the river<sup>29</sup> should be dried up: that the city should be taken in the time<sup>30</sup> of a feast, while her mighty men were drunken; which accordingly came to pass, when Belshazzar and all his thousand princes, who were drunk with him at the feast, were<sup>31</sup> slain by Cyrus’s soldiers. Also it was particularly foretold, that God *would make*<sup>32</sup> the country of Babylon a possession for the bittern, and pools of water; which was accordingly fulfilled by the overflowing and drowning of it, on the breaking down of the great dam in order to take the

27 Newcome’s Ezekiel, pref. p. 31, 36, 37.

28 Is. xiii. 17, xxi. 2.

29 Jer. l. 38. li. 36.

30 Jer. li. 39, 57.

31 Cyropædia, lib. 7.

32 Is. xiv. 23.



city. Could the correspondence of these events with the predictions be the result of chance? But *suppose* 'these predictions were forged after the event: can the following ones also have been written after the event? or, with any reason, be ascribed to chance? *The wild beasts*<sup>33</sup> *of the desert—shall dwell there, and the owls shall dwell therein: and it shall be NO MORE inhabited for EVER.—They shall not*<sup>34</sup> *take of thee a stone for a corner,—but thou shalt be desolate for EVER, saith the Lord,—Babylon*<sup>35</sup>, *the glory of kingdoms,—shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah; it shall NEVER be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there, neither shall the shepherds make their fold there: but wild beasts of the desert shall lie there.* Concerning Tyre, the prediction is no less remarkable: *I will*<sup>36</sup> *make thee like the top of a rock; thou shalt be a place to spread nets upon; thou shalt be built NO MORE.—The merchants*<sup>37</sup> *among the people shall hiss at thee, thou shalt be a terror, and NEVER shall be any more. All they*<sup>38</sup> *that know thee among the people shall be astonished at thee*<sup>39</sup>.'

'You actually see the completion of many of the prophecies' of scripture, says bp. Newton, 'in the state of men and things around you, and you have the prophecies themselves recorded in books, which books have been read in public assemblies these 1700 or 2000 years, have been dispersed into several countries, have been translated into several languages, and quoted and commented upon by different authors of different ages and nations, so that there is no room to suspect so much as a possibility of forgery or illusion.' And it may be added, that 'the more you know of ancient and modern times, and the farther you search into the truth of history, the more you will be satisfied of the truth of prophecy'<sup>40</sup>.

33 Jer. l. 39.

34 Jer. li. 26.

35 Is. xiii. 19, 20, 21.

36 Ezek. xxvi. 14.

37 Ezek. xxvii. 36.

38 Ezek. xxviii. 19.

39 A Disc. concerning the Being and Attributes of God, and the Truth and Certainty of the Christian Revelation, 9th ed. p. 426.

40 Vol. III. p. 420, 423.

‘Jesus himself,’ says the bishop of Worcester, ‘appeals to the *spirit of prophecy*, as bearing witness to his person and dispensation. *Search the scriptures*, says he to the Jews,—*they are they which testify of me*<sup>41</sup>.—How generally they did so he explained at large in that remarkable conversation with two of his disciples after his resurrection, when, *beginning at Moses and ALL the prophets, he expounded unto them in ALL the scriptures*<sup>42</sup> the things concerning himself.’ Accordingly ‘the argument from prophecy is not to be formed from the consideration of single prophecies, but from all the prophecies taken together, and considered as making one system; in which, from the mutual dependance and connexion of its parts, preceding prophecies prepare and illustrate those which follow, and these, again, reflect light on the foregoing: just as, in any philosophical system, that which shews the solidity of it is the harmony and correspondence of the whole; not the application of it in particular instances. Hence, though the evidence be but small, from the completion of any one prophecy, taken separately, yet, that evidence being always something, the amount of the whole evidence, resulting from a great number of prophecies, all relative to the same design, may be considerable; like many scattered rays, which, though each be weak in itself, yet, concentered into one point, shall form a strong light, and strike the sense very powerfully<sup>43</sup>.’

The passages that follow relate to prophecy in general.

If the infidel object against the divine original of the predictions of scripture, that there is much of darkness and of difficulty belonging to them, let it be remembered, that this objection is far from being peculiar to prophecy. It does, says Dr. Blair, in his sermon on our Imperfect Knowledge of a Future State, plainly appear ‘to be the plan of the Deity, in all his dispensations to mix light with darkness, evidence with uncertainty. Whatever the reasons of this procedure be, the fact is undeniable.’ Indeed ‘upon the supposition of immortality, this life is no other than the childhood of

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41 John v. 39.

42 Luke xxiv. 27.

43 Hurd, vol. I. p. 35, 47.

existence; and the measures of our knowledge must needs be proportioned to such a state<sup>44</sup>.'

Since natural religion is by no means exempt from difficulties, it is, in truth, far from being reasonable to expect, that none should be found in revealed religion. With respect to those which attend the Jewish and Christian revelations, it may, says Dr. Priestley, be remarked, that the question is not, whether any of the particulars I have been considering, '*seperately taken*, be likely or unlikely to come from God, but whether *the whole system*, attended with such difficulties, may be divine. If it were possible that any person should be asked, *a priori*, whether it was probable, that, under the government of a wise and good being, an innocent child should inherit the diseases, poverty, and vices of its parent; or whether no distinction would be made between the righteous and the wicked in war, pestilence, famine, or earthquakes, he would certainly answer it was not probable; though when he should come to know, and attentively consider the whole system, of which such events make a part, he might be satisfied, that it was the result of perfect wisdom, directed by infinite goodness; and even that a scheme more favorable to happiness or virtue could not have been formed; and the time may come, when we shall know and acknowledge the same with respect to the *extraordinary*, that we do with respect to the *ordinary*, dispensations of the Divine Being<sup>45</sup>.'

Many enquirers into the prophetic pages of scripture have, says bp. Hurd, been misled by the 'folly of commenting on prophecy by the false lights of the imagination.—It is true that prophecy, in the very idea of that term, at least in the scriptural idea of it, implies the divine agency; and that, exerted not merely in giving the faculty itself, but in directing all its operations. Yet I know not how it is, that, when men address themselves to the study of the prophetic scriptures, they are apt to let this so necessary idea slip out of their minds; and to discourse upon them just as they would or

44 Serm. vol. I. p. 88, 100.

45 Institutes, vol. II. p. 88.

might do, on the supposition that the prophet was left at liberty to dispense this gift, in all respects, as he should think proper. No wonder then, that they should misconceive of its character, and entertain very different notions about the exercise of this power from what the scriptures give them of it.'

If the power and the mode of predicting were entirely at the disposal of man, 'it is likely enough that the prophet for his own credit, or for what he might fancy to be the sole end of prophecy, might chuse' to predict future events 'with all possible clearness, and in such sort that obstinacy itself must see and admit the completion of them: but' if, on the contrary, 'the prophet was only the minister and instrument of the divine counsels, in the high office committed to him,' those who assume it as a principle, 'that divine prophecy must be delivered with the utmost clearness and perspicuity, and fulfilled with irresistible evidence,—will do well to answer, at their leisure, the following questions. How do they know in what manner, and with what circumstances, it was fit for divine wisdom to dispense a knowledge of futurity to mankind? How can they previously determine the degree of evidence, with which a prediction must be either given or fulfilled? What assurance have they, that no reasonable ends could be served by prophecies, expressed with some obscurity, and accomplished in a sense much below what may seem necessary to unavoidable conviction? Can they even pretend, on any clear principles of reason, that very important ends, perhaps the most important, may not be answered by that mode of conveyance, which appears to them so exceptionable? Can they, in a word, determine before-hand, I do not say with certainty, but with any color of probability, what *must* be the character of divine prophecy, when they know not the reason, most undoubtedly not *all* the reasons, why it is given, and have even no right to demand that it should be given at all? Till these, and other questions of the like sort, be pertinently answered, it must be in vain to



censure the ways of providence, as not corresponding to our imperfect and short-sighted views<sup>46</sup>.'

'The ill success of men in explaining prophecies of events, not yet come to pass, can' says the bp. of Worcester in another place, 'in no degree discredit those prophecies, unless it be essential to this sort of revelation to be so clearly proposed, as that it may and must be *perfectly understood*, before those events happen; the contrary of which I have' shewn. 'The very idea of prophecy is that of *a light shining in a dark place*<sup>47</sup>; and a place is not *dark*, if we have light enough to discern distinctly and fully *every remote corner of it*. But the thing speaks itself. For to what end is the prediction delivered in obscure and enigmatic terms, if the purpose of the inspirer was, that the subject of the prediction should be immediately, and in all its circumstances, precisely apprehended? Why, then, is any distinction made between Prophecy and History? *The mode of writing* clearly demonstrates, that something, for a time at least, was meant to be concealed from us<sup>48</sup>.'

It has been objected, as a circumstance altogether strange and improbable, that so signal a gift as that of prophecy should have been bestowed upon the Jews, a nation so obscure, inconsiderable, unenlightened. On this point also I quote from bp. Hurd. To prove the truth of Christianity, and to foreshew the advent of the Messiah, with the revolutions and the establishment of his kingdom; was, says the prelate, the purpose of prophecy. 'It was therefore confined to one nation, purposely set apart to preserve and attest the oracles of God; and to exhibit, in their public records and whole history, the proofs and credentials of an amazing dispensation, which God had decreed to accomplish in Christ Jesus.—The *testimony* thought fit to be given was not one or two prophecies only, but a *scheme* of prophecy, gradually prepared and continued through a large tract of time. But how could such a scheme be executed,

46 Hurd, vol. I. p. 3, 4, 15, 18.

47 2 Pet. i. 19.

48 Hurd, vol. II. p. 66.

or rather how could it clearly be seen that there was such a scheme in view, if some *one* people had not been made the repository, and, in part, the instrument of the divine counsels in regard to Jesus ; some *one* people, I say, among whom we might trace the several parts of such a scheme, and observe the dependance they had on each other?—For had the notice concerning the redeemer been dispersed indifferently among *all* nations, where had been that uncorrupt and unsuspected testimony, that continuity of evidence, that unbroken chain of prediction, all tending, by just degrees, to the same point, which we now contemplate with wonder in the Jewish scriptures? It is not then that the rest of the world was overlooked in the plan of God's providence ; but that he saw fit to employ the ministry of *one* people : this last, I say, and not the other, is the reason why the divine communications concerning Christ were appropriated to the Jews. ' " Yes, but some one of the greater nations had better been intrusted with that charge." This circumstance, I allow, might have struck a superficial observer more : but could the integrity of the prophetic scheme have been more discernible amidst the multiform and infinitely involved transactions of a mighty people, than in the simpler story of this small Jewish family ? Or would the hand or work of God, who loves to manifest himself by weak instruments, have been more conspicuous in that designation?—The benefits of prophecy, though conveyed by one nation, would finally redound to all ; and the more *effectually*, we have seen, for being conveyed by one nation. May we not conclude then (having the *fact*, as I said, to reason upon) that, to obtain such purpose, it was fit to select a peculiar people ? And, if thus much be acknowledged, it will hardly be thought a question of much moment, though no answer could be given to it, why the Jews had that exclusive privilege conferred upon them<sup>49</sup>.

It has been urged, by the objectors against prophecy, that the pointing out of future events is to be satisfactorily

accounted for by that superior degree of sagacity, by which some men are seen to be distinguished ; and that conjectures, as experience informs us, will not unfrequently be realised by chance and a felicity of coincidence. This objection bp. Hurd has answered at considerable length. Much as I have quoted from this able writer, I am unwilling to omit the insertion of a part of his reply. That the completion of two or three predictions, though they perfectly correspond to the events to which they are applied, does not infer a certainty of inspiration, the bishop of Worcester readily admits. If, however, says the prelate, ‘ the prophecies in the Old and New Testament be *very numerous*, and if those prophecies, so many of them, I mean, as are alleged in this controversy with unbelievers, have had a reasonable completion,—it must appear highly credible and probable, that so numerous prophecies, so fulfilled, had not their origin from human conjecture, nor their accomplishment from what we call *chance*. For mere conjecture is not usually so happy ; nor chance so constant. Farther still ; if the scriptural prophecies have been completed in numerous instances, and if in *no* instance whatsoever can it be clearly shewn, that they have failed in the event, the presumption is still stronger that such coincidence could not be fortuitous ; and a material difference between scriptural prophecy and pagan divination is, at the same time, pointed out. For, that, in the multitude of pretended oracles in the days of paganism, some few only should come to pass, while the generality of them fell to the ground, may well be the sport of *fortune*. But, that very many prophecies, recorded in our scriptures, have had an evident completion, when not *one* of all those, there recorded, can be convicted of imposture, must surely be the work of design.’ But the prophecies of scripture are not merely *numerous*, A great number of them are also eminently *minute* and *circumstantial*. ‘ On the whole, the general evidence for the truth of Christianity, as resulting from the scriptural prophecies, though possibly not *that*,

which some may wish or expect, is yet apparently very considerable. *Some* coincidences might fall out, by accident; and *more* might be imagined. But when *so many*, and *such* prophecies are brought together, and compared with their corresponding events, it becomes ridiculous (because the effect is in no degree proportioned to the cause) to say of such coincidences, that they are the creatures of *fancy*, or could have been the work of *chance*<sup>50</sup>.

‘The truth of our religion, like the truth of common matters, is,’ says bp. Butler, ‘to be judged of by all the evidence taken together. And unless the whole series of things which may be alleged in this argument, and every particular thing in it, can reasonably be supposed to have been *by accident*; (for here the stress of the argument for Christianity lies;) then is the truth of it proved.—It is obvious, how much advantage, the nature of this evidence gives to those persons, who attack Christianity, especially in conversation. For it is *easy* to shew, in a short and lively manner, that such and such things are liable to objection; that this, and another thing, is of little weight in itself; but *impossible* to shew, in like manner, the united force of the whole argument in one view<sup>51</sup>.’

‘The following qualities,’ says Dr. Johnston of Hollywood, ‘seem inseparable from prophecy; at least they are found in every prophecy which I have considered; and appear to me to be closely connected with the very nature of prophecy. 1st. That the prophecies are expressed in dark, but never in contradictory language. 2d. That, BEFORE THEIR ACCOMPLISHMENT, THE GREAT OUTLINES OF THE EVENTS MAY BE DISCOVERED WITH CERTAINTY; but not all the minute circumstances. 3d. That, the nearer the time of their accomplishment approaches, more of the predictions may be known.—And 4th, that neither before the event shall the general meaning of the prophecy, nor after the event shall the full meaning of it, appear to the

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50 Vol. I. p. 107, 120.

51 Butler's Analogy, p. 401.



generality of mankind; but they shall appear to those persons only, who study it, with competent knowlege, uprightness, and diligence<sup>52</sup>.'

That there are difficulties in the prophets, at present inexplicable to the upright and the diligent, as well as to the careless and the ignorant, is on all hands admitted. But surely the admission of this fact does not necessarily lead to the conclusion, that these difficulties will never be removed, either by the fulfilment of the events predicted, or by the successful industry and the united talents of succeeding critics. Four or five centuries ago, antecedently to the resurrection of letters, how extremely little was known of the Jewish or the Christian prophets, with any degree of accuracy or certainty, in comparison of what now is known! Is there not then ground to believe, that a renewal of the same efforts will be productive of similar effects? Is there not reason, not merely to hope, but confidently to conclude, that many of those obscurities, which now in a considerable degree darken the face of prophecy, will be cleared up by the acumen and research of the commentators who shall hereafter appear; and that future ages will consequently possess a very superior acquaintance with the prophetic scriptures, as well as with every other species of knowlege?

Dr. Hartly, in the second part of his *Observations on Man*, enters upon the evidences of the prophetic scriptures. That '*the degree of obscurity, which is found in the prophecies of the scriptures, is not so great as to invalidate the foregoing evidences for their divine authority: but, on the contrary, is itself an indirect testimony in their favor,*' is the thirty-first proposition of that work. In order to prove this, this celebrated physician observes, '*First, that there are a sufficient number of prophecies, whose interpretation is certain, clear, and precise, to shew that their agreement with the events predicted is far above the powers of chance, or human foresight. But for the proof of this*

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52 On the Apoc. vol. I. p. 6.

point, which takes in a great compass of literature, I must,' says Dr. Hartley, 'refer to the writers who have treated it in detail. And as those, who have examined this point with accuracy and impartiality, do, as I presume, universally agree to the position here laid down, so those who have not done it, can have no pretence for asserting the contrary; this being an historical matter, which is to be determined as others of a like kind, viz. by the historical evidences.—*Secondly*, that, even in the types and prophecies where interpreters differ from each other, the differences are often so inconsiderable, and the agreements so general,—as to exclude both chance and human-foresight, i. e. to infer a divine communication.—*Thirdly*, I observe that those types and prophecies, whose interpretation is so obscure, that interpreters have not been able to discover any probable application, cannot any ways invalidate the evidence arising from the rest. They are analogous to those parts of the works of nature, whose uses, and subserviency to the rest, are not yet understood. And as no one calls in question the evidences of design, which appear in many parts of the human body, because the uses of others are not yet known; so the interpretations of prophecy, which are clearly or probably made out, remain the same evidence of design, notwithstanding that unsurmountable difficulties may hitherto attend many other parts<sup>53</sup> of the prophetic writings. *Fourthly*, it is predicted in the prophecies, that *in the latter times* great multitudes will be converted to the Christian faith; whereas those who preach or *prophecy* during the great apostacy, shall be able to do this only in an obscure, imperfect manner, and convert but a few. Now the past and present obscurity of prophecy

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53 'The obscurity or unintelligibleness of one part of a prophecy, does not, in any degree, invalidate the proof of foresight, arising from the appearing completion of those other parts which are understood. For the case is evidently the same, as if those parts which are understood, were lost, or not written at all, or written in an unknown tongue.' Butler's Analogy, 1750, p. 366.

agrees remarkably with this prediction ; and the opening, which is already made, since the revival of letters, in applying the prophecies to the events, seems to presage, that *the latter times* are now approaching ; and that by the more full discovery of the true meaning of the prophetic writings, and of their aptness to signify the events predicted, there will be such an accession of evidence to the divine authority of the scriptures, as none but the wilfully ignorant, the profligate, and the obdurate can withstand. It is therefore a confirmation of the prophetic writings, that, by the obscurity of one part of them, a way should be prepared for effecting that glorious conversion of all nations, which is predicted in others, in the time and manner in which it is predicted<sup>54</sup>.’

Perhaps the following remarks of Dr. Worthington are not altogether inapplicable to the conclusion of the preceding extract from Dr. Hartley. Time may ‘operate, and often doth, on the side of both probability and credibility. It is a proverbial saying, that time brings every thing to light. It often detects frauds and impostures, removes false colorings and disguises, and overcomes prejudices, which obscured the evidence, and kept the mind in suspense from giving its assent. It may bring new proofs to light, which lay hid before ; and what was no more than barely probable, or credible, may become absolutely certain. Sir Isaac Newton had made a probable conjecture, concerning the form of the earth : what he rendered probable, the French geometricians have since demonstrated to be certain. Things incredible to some persons and ages, have been known to others for certain truths. The late discoveries in philosophy, and the reports of travellers, are full of instances of this kind ; and what the philosopher knows for certain, shocks the faith of the peasant. Apply this to revelation. At the first preaching of the gospel, it was *thought a thing incredible, that God should raise the dead.*

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54 On Man, 1749, vol. II. p. 157.

Acts, xxvi. 8. And Paul seemed, to the men of Athens, to be *a setter-forth of strange Gods, because he preached unto them Jesus and the resurrection*, ch. xvii. 18, and yet Jesus and the resurrection were soon afterwards believed in by great numbers there and elsewhere<sup>55</sup>.

Of the importance of contemplating, frequently and accurately, those arguments in support of revelation, which are derived from prophecy, Christians, I apprehend, are not in general sufficiently apprised. ‘*Faith*,’ says an eminent writer, ‘is not one absolute and determinate thing, but it admits of *degrees*; proceeding from a simple *assent* to a proposition, which arises from a bare preponderancy of the arguments in favor of it, and advancing by the same insensible gradation, to that *fulness of persuasion*, which arises from the perception of the greatest clearness and strength of the evidence for it. The passions and affections, if they be at all moved by a bare assent, will be extremely languid, though the thing itself be of the greatest moment; whereas a full persuasion of the reality of an interesting object excites the most vigorous and fervent emotions. The difference of the impression they make upon the mind is properly compared to the effect of an object, placed at a very great, or a very small distance. If any thing in the conduct of life depend upon belief, we shall, in the former case, be hardly influenced by it at all; a very small motive being sufficient to overpower the effect of so superficial a faith; at best we shall be irresolute and inconstant; whereas, in the latter case, we shall be determined to vigorous and immediate action. It is, therefore, of the greatest consequence, not only that unbelievers be made converts to the Christian faith, but that the faith of believers themselves be strengthened, and they be thereby converted from merely *nominal* into *real* Christians.—Now faith is *increased* by the very same means by which it is first *generated*, viz. by an attention to the proper evidences, and a frequent contemplation of the object of it. Those persons therefore,



who call themselves Christians, and who must be supposed to wish to feel and act as becomes Christians, should study the evidences of their religion.—They should both frequently read the scriptures, and also other books, which tend to prove their truth, and illustrate their contents<sup>56</sup>.’

Having so long confined the attention of the reader to general remarks alone, I shall shortly again bring before his view some illustrations of particular prophecies: having had an opportunity, on the subject of the present chapter, of selecting from a more than ordinary number of excellent writers, I shall abstain from introducing any observations of my own.

The present chapter consists almost entirely of extracts. If this circumstance be conceived to call for an apology, I have only to observe, that it seemed important to the cause of truth and to the interests of revelation, that all the principal arguments on the credibility of prophecy, arguments which have already been clearly stated by different writers, should *be brought together*<sup>57</sup> *into a tolerably narrow compass*; and that I was unacquainted with any work, in which this useful task had been completely performed. And though there may occasionally, in the course of the extracts, have been somewhat of repetition, it may be remarked, that the ideas repeated are generally sufficiently important, to deserve to be brought before the mind again and again, and to be placed in a variety of lights.

56 Priestley's Institutes, vol. I. p. 168.

57 At the same time it may not be improper to observe, that those general remarks on prophecy, which are introduced in the ivth chapter of the present work, occur not again in the xixth; and therefore these two chapters may, with propriety, be perused in connexion.





















